NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

THE DYNAMIC BETWEEN NATIONAL IDENTITY AND FOREIGN POLICY IN TURKEY

by

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December 2009

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		*Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188*
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.		
1. AGENCY USE ONLY *(Leave blank)*	**2. REPORT DATE** December 2009	**3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED** Master's Thesis
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE The Dynamic between National Identity and Foreign Policy in Turkey		**5. FUNDING NUMBERS**
6. AUTHOR(S) William Joseph Bullen III		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000		**8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER**
9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A		**10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER**
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.		
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited		**12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE**

13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

Recently, Turkey's foreign policy has undergone some considerable changes. In order to understand why this has occurred, and where Turkey's foreign policy will likely go in the future, one must examine Turkey's national identity. Today, Turkey's dominant national identity reflects a blend between modern, secular, and western customs with traditional Ottoman and Islamic culture: a "neo-Ottoman" identity. This synthesis of traditional and modern identities grew out of the 1980s and was solidified when the Justice and Development party (AKP), a secular party with strong roots in political Islam, was elected in 2002 and then re-elected twice with the largest plurality. This revisiting of Ottoman-Islamic culture is reflected in Turkey's foreign policy. Now that Turkey has shifted back to a greater comfort in its Ottoman-Islamic identity, it has reopened better relations with the Muslim world, which significantly differs from Turkey's foreign policy prior to 2002. While Turkey will continue solid relations with the west, it will only do so as long as it is in Ankara's own interest.

14. SUBJECT TERMS Turkey, National Identity, Foreign Policy, Neo-Ottoman, Recip Tayyip Erdogan, Turgut Ozal, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, Political Islam, Justice and Development Party (AKP)			**15. NUMBER OF PAGES** 101
			16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	**18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE** Unclassified	**19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT** Unclassified	**20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT** UU

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THE DYNAMIC BETWEEN NATIONAL IDENTITY AND FOREIGN POLICY IN TURKEY

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
(EUROPE AND EURASIA)**

from the

**NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
December 2009**

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ABSTRACT

Recently, Turkey's foreign policy has undergone some considerable changes. In order to understand why this has occurred, and where Turkey's foreign policy will likely go in the future, one must examine Turkey's national identity. Today, Turkey's dominant national identity reflects a blend between modern, secular, and western customs with traditional Ottoman and Islamic culture: a "neo-Ottoman" identity. This synthesis of traditional and modern identities grew out of the 1980s and was solidified when the Justice and Development party (AKP), a secular party with strong roots in political Islam, was elected in 2002 and then re-elected twice with the largest plurality. This revisiting of Ottoman-Islamic culture is reflected in Turkey's foreign policy. Now that Turkey has shifted back to a greater comfort in its Ottoman-Islamic identity, it has reopened better relations with the Muslim world, which significantly differs from Turkey's foreign policy prior to 2002. While Turkey will continue solid relations with the West, it will only do so as long as it is in Ankara's own interest.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I need to express my gratitude for Captain Timothy Doorey's, USN (retired), direction and encouragement for me to take on this study. I especially want to express my sincere appreciation for professor Anne Marie Baylouny and professor Victoria Clement. Their guidance, patience, and attention to detail has been invaluable to my academic development.

Most importantly, I thank my family. I thank my sister for always trying to keep me in line, and I thank my Mom and Dad for instilling in me a sense of discipline and the importance of education, to challenge myself, and to always do my best. But above all, I thank them for their perpetual love and support.

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I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   IMPORTANCE

Turkey's foreign policy is unique, in part, because its geographic foothold in both Asia and Europe provides the country with the potential to be one of the major centers or crossroads of global politics.   In addition to its geographical position and large size, Turkey's economy has grown significantly faster than most other developing states, boasting the seventeenth-largest nominal GDP in the world.[1] Because of its growing power in this strategically important region of the world, Turkey will greatly influence not only its Balkan and Middle Eastern neighbors, but also other large global powers, such as the European Union, Russia, and the United States.

Since the United States has large interests in the Middle East, Europe, and Eurasia, it is crucial that the United States understands what drives Turkey's foreign policy. Turkey's foreign policy has begun to change in noticeable ways recently. This was reflected in its decision to take an active role in establishing better or open relations with Muslim states and organizations—many viewed as anti-Western—such as Iran, Syria, and Hamas. Simultaneously, Ankara began to show a more neutral, albeit open, stance toward longtime allies, such as Israel and the United States.[2] But why has Turkey's foreign policy changed? The answer to this question largely lies in Turkey's changing dominant national identity, which has gradually redefined Turkey's national interest and, thus, its foreign policy today. In order to continue productive relations with Turkey, it is critical that U.S. policy makers understand the changes in Turkey's dominant national identity.

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[1] World Economic Indicators Database, [Web site] http://siteresources.worldbank.org/DATASTATISTICS/Resources/GDP.pdf, World Bank, 2008.

[2] Ahmet Davotglu, *Stratejik Derinlik*, 281–282, in Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, United States Institute of Peace Press, Washington DC, 2008, 43–44.

B. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

Exploring Turkey's evolving national identity offers the potential to better forecast the future direction of Turkey's foreign policy. Defining national identity allows one to understand a state's national interest and "can affect predictions about future action"[3] or, in other words, "national interest—what states want—drives foreign policy."[4] The current ruling party, the Justice and Development Party [*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi*] (AKP), led by Tayyip Recep Erdogan, has helped consolidate a new dominant national identity that has been growing since the mid-1980s, during the reign of the Motherland Party [*Anavatan Partisi*] (ANAP), led by Turgut Ozal.

This dominant national identity reflects a synthesis between Turkey's Ottoman-Islamic history and culture with its nationalist, secular, Western, modern traditions that the state was founded on by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in 1923. For the purposes of this thesis, this dominant national identity will be called "neo-Ottoman"[5] or "synthetic"[6] identity. Beginning with Ozal's liberalization reforms and continuing through the AKP's reforms, Turkey has seen a growing transformation of its dominant national identity, largely differing from the staunchly secular-nationalist identity it possessed before the mid-1980s. Since their first election in 2002, the AKP has furthered the neo-Ottoman identity, making it the dominant national identity that presides over Turkey today; as reflected through the AKP's large number of votes making them the largest plurality and dominant political party in Turkey. As a result of this identity shift, Turkey's foreign policy has changed as well; "Identity plays a significant role in the construction and application of foreign policy."[7] Conversely, foreign policy also has a large impact on

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[3] Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrara, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott, "Identity as a Variable," *Perspectives on Politics*, December 2006, 33.

[4] Anne L. Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests*, The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 2009, 1.

[5] M. Hakan Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," *Middle East Critique* 7, iss. 12, 1998, 19.

[6] See Clement M. Henry and Robert Springborg explain the "synthesizers" of moralist and globalist ideals in the Middle East and North Africa, but mainly Turkey, in *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge UK, 2001, 200, 207–212.

[7] Bulent Aras, *Turkey and the Greater Middle East*, TASAM, (Istanbul, 2004), 87–88, in Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, United States Institute of Peace Press (Washington D.C, 2007), 93

national identity, echoing Graham Fuller's assessment, "Foreign policy expresses not only what one wants, but also what one is."[8] The large acceptance of the AKP's social, political, and economic reforms serves as significant evidence that the Turks have welcomed a change; thus redefining the identity that represents the average Turk. This shift in national identity is subsequently transforming foreign policy as exemplified through Turkey's changing relationships with the United States, the European Union, Eurasia, and the Middle East.

C.   HYPOTHESES AND PROBLEMS

This study builds upon the theoretical framework that national identity and foreign policy have an impact on each other.[9] This dynamic between national identity and foreign policy is especially interesting in regards to present-day Turkey. Today, Turkey's dominant national identity has shifted toward a much larger acceptance of its Islamic traditions and Ottoman heritage while, at the same time, maintaining a strong connection with the initial secular-nationalist Western culture that Turkey has adopted since it became a modern republic in 1923. This change has led to a transformation in Turkey's foreign policy orientation which, before the AKP, had closely aligned itself with the United States, even after the Cold War. Since 2002, however, Turkey has begun to act more independently in its foreign policy, seeking to take a leader-like and influential role in its region with the hopes of one day becoming a global power.[10] To do this, the AKP has made a strong effort in building good relations toward all of its neighboring states, even countries the United States finds hostile. But, rather than turning its back on the United States and other global powers, it has sought to incorporate a

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[8] Graham E. Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, United States Institute of Peace Press (Washington D.C, 2007), 93.

[9] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests*, 1.

[10] Ahmet Davutoglu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," Insight Turkey, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2008, 83.

multi-dimensional foreign policy that includes bilateral and multi-lateral ties with the United States, NATO, Russia, and most importantly the EU, as Turkey desires to become a full-fledged member.[11]

Since the birth of modern Turkey in 1923, Turkey has struggled with defining its self-image or national identity. Many Turkish citizens have been strongly divided in what they identify with and continue to be today. Thus, Turkey has been described as being a "torn country"[12] situated between East and West with it remaining to be seen which side it will lean toward. However, this thesis will argue that Turkey will not lean to one specific side. Rather, Turkey has found that it is more beneficial for them to balance relations on multiple sides, and will continue to maintain this position as long as it remains in the national interest, guided by the current ruling party. This foreign policy has influenced Turkey's national identity because its leaders are re-engaging regions that it has neglected since the fall of the Ottoman Empire. Many of these regions are in fact what encompassed the Ottoman Empire or regions with which the Ottoman Empire had once had close relations. Since the head of the Ottoman Empire was also the Islamic Caliphate, Turkey has used its Islamic heritage to court various Islamic states in the Middle East, North Africa, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. Turkey has also used its common Ottoman history and former influence to build closer relations with Balkan states.[13] At the same time, Turkey is continuing its strong connection with the European Union through its hope of one day becoming a member, bettering its relations with a traditional foe, Russia, through revamping energy security deals, and remaining a partner with the United States; albeit under recent tensions.[14] As a result, Turkey is establishing an amalgamation between what it has adopted from Western culture and its traditional Ottoman-Islamic culture; redefining what it means to be a Turk.

One of the problems with this argument is that Turkey encompasses multiple highly influential and popular identities. Indeed, one of the important aspects of this

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[11] Davutoglu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," 82.

[12] Samuel P. Huntington, "A Clash of Civilizations?," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72, No.3, 1992–1993, 42.

[13] Birgul Demirtas-Coskun, "Systemic Changes and State Identity: Turkish and German Responses," *Insight Turkey*, Vol.10 No. 1, 2008, 39.

[14] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 93–162.

paper is that it attempts to show that most Turks have discharged the concept of the unitary, official identity set forth by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, Turkey's founding father; but have grown to respect and recognize multiple self-images Turkish citizens identify with. However, there seems to be a dominant collective identity emerging in Turkey: the neo-Ottoman identity. This identity attempts to incorporate and synthesize *both* democracy and Islam; capitalism and social welfare; modernization and tradition; pursuit of wealth and piety.[15] This has mainly been fostered through the rise of a new business and political elite with Islamic backgrounds.[16] "This new form of political identity can be called neo-Ottoman (Turkish-Islamic) political discourse, and it shapes what constitutes Turkish national interest."[17] However, there are many other cultural images other Turks identify with that can conflict with the neo-Ottomans. There is no doubt that many Turks find difficulty accepting a neo-Ottoman identity or may even perceive it as a threat. It is also important to note that collective identities do not mean an individual's identity. Many individuals may identify more with what one may call a "sub-identity": identities that reflect an individual's ethnicity, gender, religion, local community, school, or family.[18] However, various groups of people's sub-identities can fall under the umbrella of national identity.[19] Indeed, it would be impossible for a state to represent a majority of its individual's identity traits. Therefore, many refer to a national identity that will help incorporate some, if not most, of their own identity characteristics.[20] Moreover, national identity itself is never static and is always changing. However, one can say that it is still crucial in understanding a group's meaning and interests through taking "snapshots of identities as they evolve, as they are challenged, and as they are constructed and reconstructed."[21]

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[15] See ideology and identity of AKP in M. Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2009, 82–99.

[16] Hasan Kosebalaban, "The Impact of Globalization on the Islamic Political Identity: The Case of Turkey," *World Affairs*, Vol. 168, Iss. 1, 27.

[17]Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 21.

[18] Marilynn B. Brewer, "The Many Faces of Social Identity: Implications for Political Psychology," *Political Psychology*, Vol. 22, No. 1, 2001, 116–117.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Ibid.

[21]Rawi Abdelal, Yoshiko M. Herrara, Alastair Iain Johnston, and Rose McDermott, "Identity as a Variable," *Perspectives on Politics*, December 2006, 17.

Another important caveat is that there are other significant forces that affect foreign policy. The affect globalization has on foreign policy has been a focus of other studies. However, globalization also plays a large role in national identity. Other studies are simply placing more emphasis on the dynamic between globalization and foreign policy, which does not refute the claim that national identity has an affect on foreign policy. In fact, globalization contributes to the continuous change national identity undergoes throughout time.[22] Indeed, various sectors of Turkish society, secular or Islamist, have largely viewed globalization as an opportunity to expand their interests.[23] Thus, many have integrated themselves in global institutions, making their national borders "porous," or more open to outside influence, changing the way in which Turks view the outside world as well as themselves.[24]

Another limitation to this hypothesis worth noting is how external, powerful, international actors, like the present day United States, can sway a state's foreign policy in a manner that would otherwise not reflect the national interests of the dominant national identity. However, this does not seem to be the case with what appears to be the dominant Turkish national identity today. To be sure, Turkey has become more independent in its foreign policy since the AKP came to power in 2002. One example of this independent stance is when the AKP rejected the United States' from staging its invasion into Iraq from its borders. Previously, Turkey had been more focused on maintaining its geostrategic or geopolitical importance as a "buffer state" or a "bridge." But today, neo-Ottomans believe that "Turkey can be a 'center' in the regional subsystem and subsequently a 'global actor' in the international system," suggesting a move away from its former foreign policy under the Kemalist-led government.[25] This suggests that Turkey's present leaders have a certain wistfulness for their Ottoman past as a glorious and powerful empire.[26] At times, this new course of foreign policy can be at odds with

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[22] Kosebalaban, "The Impact of Globalization on Islamic Political Identity: The Case of Turkey," 29.

[23] Henry and Springborg, *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, 209.

[24] Frank Louis Rusciano, "The Construction of National Identity- A 23 Nation Study," *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 56, No. 3, 2003, 364.

[25] Yucel Bodaglioglu, "Modernity, Identity, and Turkey's Foreign Policy," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 10, No.1, 2008, 70.

[26] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 95 and 209.

the interests of Turkey's traditional closest ally, the United States. This is much different from Turkey's former foreign policy, which tended to align itself with U.S. policies and ignore many of its neighboring states, south and east of Turkey. Now, Turkey has made a vigilant effort toward developing better relations with all of its neighbors. As evidence of this, Turkey's Foreign Minister, Dr. Ahmet Davutoglu, has adopted a "zero problem policy toward Turkey's neighbors."[27] As a result, Turkey has been involved in building better relations with Syria, Iran, Iraq, Georgia, Bulgaria, and further into the Caucasus, Central Asia, and more of the Middle East; regions that Turkey has traditionally ignored or been indifferent toward until recently. But what explains this gradual shift in Turkey's foreign policy over the last five to seven years? It will be argued that the neo-Ottoman identity, which grew out of the mid-1980s, has been solidified by the new political elite, the AKP, and has become the dominant national identity in Turkey.[28] Subsequently, the neo-Ottoman identity has had a large impact on Turkey's foreign policy.

D.   LITERATURE AND THEORY

First, one must ask: Why explore the theory denoting the relationship between national identity and foreign policy and not other theories that help explain changes in foreign policy direction? Although national identity greatly affects a state's foreign policy, there are many other studies that have placed more weight on other modes of analysis in explaining the driving forces of foreign policy. Some favor economic modes of analysis as their primary baseline for what directs a state's foreign policy because of the influence a better economy has on the decision making of state leaders. However, this mode of analysis is lacking, due to the fact that not all state interests are composed of economic advancement.[29] This is especially relevant in today's Muslim countries. One only needs to look at the phenomenon of privately-owned Islamic banks in Turkey, that

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[27] Davutoglu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," 80.

[28] "Dominant" national identity does not entail a "majority," but rather implies the largest plurality within the Turkish population, which marginalizes other identities in the state.

[29] Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996), 15.

reject charging interest and do not rely primarily on economic interests, but on the religious and social interests of their constituents.[30]

Other studies attempt to explain foreign policy through the lens of various international relations theories, which also favor an economic mode of analysis, such as *structural neorealism*, suggesting that international policy is driven by the balancing of differences in the capabilities in the international system.[31] Another dominant school of thought is *institutional neoliberlism*, which counters much of the realist perspective by claiming that states can coordinate with each other without constantly balancing their power with other states. It believes that setting up international institutions that monitor state activities will create more "political transparency" and thus, "ameliorate conflicting interests between states."[32] Although these views have had a profound impact on the studies of foreign policy, they do not explain foreign policy for particular states because they assume state interests are primarily controlled by material factors, like military and economic gain for a state.[33] These theorists are more interested in explaining why the international system works in the manner it does through historic observation and focusing on the rationality of state actors. However, this thesis takes the view that, "State interests do not exist to be 'discovered' by self-interested, rational actors. Interests are constructed through a process of social interaction."[34] The answer to the question "'how people and organizations define self-interest' lies in the issue of identity…with which people and organizations relate to one another."[35] This thesis will not counter what the

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[30] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 44–46.

[31] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass. Addison –Wesley, 1979. Cited in: Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). 14.

[32] Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984). Cited in: Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). 14.

[33] Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, 15.

[34] Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, 2.

[35] Robert Keohane, "Empathy and International Relations," in Jane J. Mansbridge, ed., Beyond Self-Interest, p. 227 (Chicago: University Chicago Press, 1990), Cited in: Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996). 15.

prominent international relations theorists have constructed; rather, it will attempt to place more emphasis on another mode of analysis that focuses more on sociological issues, primarily *identity*.

In order to assess the argument that Turkey's national identity affects its foreign policy and vice versa, it is necessary first to build upon a theoretical framework that highlights the relationship between national identity and foreign policy. Although this is a relatively new concept, with studies dating back only a couple of decades, there are multiple new works that draw upon the dynamic between national identity and foreign policy. The most prominent of these approaches, until recently, has been the "constructivist" approach. Constructivism can be summed up as the "focus on the ways in which norms, institutions, and other cultural features of domestic and international environments affect state security interests and policies."[36] This thesis will attempt to discuss Turkey in a very similar context. However, these constructivist scholars focus more on how state identity is affected by the "other" rather than by the "self." They attribute a state's identity mostly to how a state "conforms with prevailing international norms, not how the state views itself in the context of its own historical experience."[37] Indeed the "other," or international community, has had a profound and continued impact on Turkey's national identity from Ataturk's Westernization projects to the reforming processes seen today for accession into the European Union. More recently, however, Turkey has been looking inward toward what defines its national self-image. With a predominantly Muslim population, that had once been the epicenter of all Sunni Muslims, Turkey has started to return to its Islamic and Ottoman past, showing a deeper regard for its Muslim culture.[38] On the other hand, the widespread use of political Islam in the last few decades throughout all Muslim countries has also had a significant effect on the interests of Turkey's political elite today.[39] Thus, it is not only the "otherness" of the

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[36] Ronald L. Jepperson, Alexander Wendt, and Peter J. Katzenstein, "Norms, Identity, and Culture in National Security," edited by: Peter J. Katzenstein, *The Culture of National Security: Norms and Identity in World Politics*, Columbia University Press, New York, 1996, 37.

[37] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests*, 6.

[38] M. Hakan Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2003, 22.

[39] Graham E. Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2003, 16.

West, but also the "otherness" of different Muslim countries that have significantly affected what Turks identify as their "self-image." Regardless, it is important to show how both the "other" and the "self" construct national identity.

A more useful and recent study of the dynamic between national identity and foreign policy is Clunan's argument for "aspirational constructivism," which allows one to better understand how identity is constructed by both the "other" and the "self" and how it affects a state's policy. Through this theoretical framework, one can discover how "members of the political elite propagate national self-images in an effort to define 'the' national identity and interest."[40] However, it is also important to mention that although the new political elite, the AKP, has helped "construct" the national identity in Turkey, the new present-day political elite did not create the national "self-image" they represent from scratch. "Elites often shape national identity and sentiment, which can have crucial consequences, but they rarely create national identity."[41] A large portion of the Turkish population, business leaders and politicians alike, have discovered and helped create this dominant identity, which is constantly evolving, before the AKP existed. The AKP is simply answering the call of their constituents and has taken a leadership role. Nevertheless, Clunan's work offers answers as to how Turkey's leaders have helped consolidate this identity that contributes to their current and future foreign policy. Indeed, Clunan's main argument for "aspirational constructivism" will be adopted and used as the primary theoretical framework for Turkey. A summary of her argument is as follows:

> Members of the political elite develop aspirations based on common historical memories. Motivated by value rationality and the need for *collective self-esteem*, they introduce competing national self-images into the political discourse. National self-images are sets of ideas about the country's political purpose and international status. These *self-images*

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[40]Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests*, 10.

[41] Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1985. Cited in: Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests*, 10.

deploy an identity management strategy- choosing from among mobility, creativity, and competition- to enhance national self-esteem.[42]

Just as Clunan's case with Post-Soviet Russia represents a significant "institutional change,"[43] so too has Turkey made "remarkable changes" in its political system since the AKP, a non-coalition party with strong roots in political Islam, became the dominant political party in 2002 for the first time.[44] To better understand this historical political change in Turkey, "aspirational constructivism" will be the most important theoretical tool in explaining the affects of Turkey's national identity changes on its foreign policy modifications.

Now that a broader theory base has been established for explaining this study, actual historical, political, social, and economical information concerning Turkey, which will lead one to better understand why specific changes in Turkey have occurred and possibly where they will lead Turkey in the future, must be provided. In this regard, Yavuz is helpful by observing directly what the specific reasons are for the gradual shift in national identity and foreign policy. His work has helped show the origins of this transformation in Turkish national identity and how it would likely affect foreign policy.

Yavuz labels the national identity that has come to dominate Turkey as Neo-Ottomanism, the very identity that has arguably been widely adopted by the AKP and will be explored throughout this thesis. He states, "in recent years, Ottoman-Islamic origins of Turkish nationhood in particular have become more assertive and effective in conditioning and shaping the state's policies and society's perception of 'self.'"[45] However, it is important to note that this work was published in 1998, four years before the AKP came to power or even existed. This serves as evidence that the political and societal ideas that the AKP, and its large constituency, identifies with and supports were developed before the AKP came to power. Yavuz describes how this new identity has

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[42] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests*, 10.

[43] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests*, 16.

[44] Chris Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe*, Granta Books, London, 2005, 2.

[45] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 22.

come to challenge the traditional notion of post-Ottoman Turkish nationalism. However, Yavuz warned how the "Ottoman-Islamic" discourse has "yet to develop into a fully coherent doctrine or set of ideas firmly endorsed by policy makers." But, soon afterward, he stated, "it is more likely that one will see a more pronounced 'Islamically' shaped neo-Ottomanist foreign policy in the future."[46] This is interesting, because today this "Ottoman-Islamic" discourse *does* have a "coherent doctrine" since the AKP has come to dominate the Turkish government. Moreover, Yavuz provided a good forecast of where Turkey's foreign policy went soon after 1998 because Turkey has made such a strong effort in bettering its relations with its Islamic neighbors since 2003.[47] Thus, Yavuz's article aids this study because it serves as a testament that examining national identity has a significant predictive power of future foreign policy. Yavuz supplements and cements this idea of neo-Ottomanism and the connection this national identity has with foreign policy throughout his books: *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey* (2003), *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti* (2006) and in his most recent *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey* (2009). All of these resources will be drawn upon throughout this study.

Bozdaglioglu touches on many of the same topics as Yavuz in his writings. After he describes how Turkey's secular identity was first formed when it became a state in 1923, he goes onto explain how Turkey gradually began to revisit its Islamic heritage culminating into the rise of political Islam or "Islamism." Finally, Bozdaglioglu explains the AKP, how this party with Islamic roots represents something much different than the traditional Islamic parties of the past, and how the AKP has helped consolidate a national identity that supports secularism but at the same time is comfortable with its Islamic traditions. He seems to give a fair and balanced view of the AKP by showing that this party "clearly supports secularism,"[48] but also warns that "its approach to modernity and the public role of Islam carries clear signs of the party leaders' devotion to Islam."[49]

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[46] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 41.

[47] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey,* 232–238.

[48] Bozdaglioglu, "Modernity, Identity, and Turkey's Foreign Policy," 68.

[49] Ibid.

Ultimately, Bozdaglioglu depicts how Turkey's national identity and foreign policy has gradually changed over the course of history into what it seems to represent today.

Bozdaglioglu provides an overview of where Turkey's national identity and foreign policy have come from and where they are going from a Turkish academic's standpoint. Although this is very useful, it is also imperative to explore what the actual foreign policy agenda is, provided by Turkey's present-day leading political party. Dr. Ahmet Davutoglu, Turkey's Foreign Minister and also a political scientist, is explicit in what Turkey's foreign policy is today. He believes that Turkey should be a "central country;" one that balances multiple regional partnerships. He states: "Turkey's diverse regional composition lends it the capability of maneuvering in several regions simultaneously; in this sense, it controls an area of influence in its immediate environs."[50] Therefore, the days of Turkey simply aligning itself with Western countries have passed. Although Turkey will continue to interact and try to uphold its relations with the West, it will also make a strong effort in building better ties with all of its regional surroundings.

Another important article that shows where the AKP stands today with its foreign policy is an interview with Turkey's Prime Minister and chairman of the ruling AKP, Recep Tayyip Erdogan. This piece was labeled "A Union of Civilizations," which challenges Samuel Huntington's controversial book, *A Clash of Civilizations*. This interview is important because it shows how Turkey's foreign policy orientation toward the EU is still extremely important to Turkey. When asked why Turkey, with its cultural differences, should become a part of the EU, Erdogan responds that, if Turkey is accepted in the EU, "this will change the view of the Islamic world toward the EU in a positive manner and vice versa. At this point in history, Turkey has a special role as a pivotal state between Europe and Asia."[51] The AKP, led by Erdogan, has strived to incorporate both its secular ideals and the freedom to express one's own religion, mainly Islam. These ideals have helped consolidate a national identity in Turkey. In turn, this identity has also affected Turkey's foreign policy, and vice versa, as seen in both Erdogan and Davotoglu's ideas of what Turkey's foreign policy should be. So far, the acceptance and

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[50]Davutoglu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," 78.

[51] Nathan Gardels interview with Recep Tayyip Erdogan, "A Union of Civiliations," *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Vol. 24. Iss. 3, 2007, 27.

popularity of the AKP's actions have shown that Turkey is comfortable with developing productive relationships with almost all of its neighbors, as well as with other global powers. Basically, Turkey seems to be open for increasing its relations with almost all states that can help serve its national interest. These new foreign policy initiatives have also impacted Turkey's society with greater interaction from all sides of its borders. Thus, Turkey's identity is being influenced by both the Muslim world and the West as well. Turkey's President, Abdullah Gul, states: "At a time that people are talking of a clash of civilizations, Turkey is a natural bridge of civilizations. All we are trying to do is use our position to bring Islam and the West closer together."[52]

Graham Fuller examines how Turkey has started to make this change in both its foreign policy and national identity. His book is useful because it is from the perspective of someone who lives outside of Turkey; a U.S. citizen who studied and lived in the region for much of his career as a United States CIA agent. The most useful aspect of this book is how Fuller outlines Turkey's past and present policy toward all states and regions that affect Turkey. Afterward, he makes multiple suggestions of where Turkey's foreign policy will go in the future; whether it be a Washington-, European-, or Ankara-"centric" policy remains to be seen.[53] Fuller leaves this question up for debate. However, this thesis will suggest that, although Turkey will try to incorporate all of these players, Turkey will only do so if it is in its own national interest. This study asserts that Turkey is moving more toward an "Ankara-centric" foreign policy.

Another good outside reference is Chris Morris' book, *The New Turkey: A Quiet Revolution on the Edges of Europe*. Although Morris is not an academic, his work as a journalist in Turkey for the British Broadcasting Company reflects an important European viewpoint. By utilizing this source, one can gain a good overview from an outside eye of the multiple cultures and societies that shape Turkey. The most important aspect of this book is the number of different people Morris interviews. He records his interactions with a myriad of different people from different ethnicities, cultures, backgrounds, occupations, classes of societies, and officials at various levels in the

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[52] Amir Taheri, "Turkey's Bid to Raise Its Islamic Profile and Court Europe May Backfire," Arab View, [Web site] www.arabview.com/articles.asp?article=471, (accessed 21 August 2008).

[53] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: A Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 165.

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government and military. The main point Morris drives toward is how Turkey has made many political and societal changes in order to shore up its bid for the EU, and that Turkey should not be ignored. He states, "The biggest change of all has been the change in mentality. The way the country is run is being revolutionized."[54] This is a valuable source because it records first-hand accounts of how Turkey's dominant national identity is changing and how this is both a driving force as well as a consequence of foreign policy.

Examining and collating the works of authors from different parts of the world and different perspectives helps offer a balanced analysis of the dynamic between Turkish national identity and foreign policy. But how does one measure what these authors provide? Utilizing multiple surveys can help supplement or support—or even refute—what these authors add to the analysis of this thesis. The surveys that will be most useful consist of *The International Republican Institute* "Survey of Turkish Public Opinion: March 29-April 14, 2008,"[55] the *Turkish Electoral Geography*,[56] and *The International Strategic Research Organization* "Foreign Policy Perception Survey: Turkey's Future in the EU: October 2004."[57] All of these resources offer reliable data concerning the feelings of the actual Turkish population. This is imperative when studying an issue at the national level.

E.   METHODS AND SOURCES

In order to support the hypothesis that the gradual shift in Turkey's national identity has affected its foreign policy, this thesis first drew upon the theoretical frameworks of various political scientists who assess the dynamic between national identity and foreign policy; mainly Clunan's argument for "aspirational constructivism." Each chapter will refer to empirical data that examines the trends of Turkey's political

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[54] Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe*, 5.

[55] The International Republican Institute, "Survey of Turkish Public Opinion: March 29–April 14, 2008," Williams and Associates, Salem, Massachusettes.

[56] Electoral Geography [Web site] http://www.electoralgeography.com/photo/maps/2007-turkeylegislative/municipalities.gif&imgrefurl=http://www.electoralgeography.com/en/countries/t/turkey/2007-legislative-elections-turkey.html (accessed 12 March 2009).

[57] Sedat Laciner, "Foreign Policy Perception Survey: Turkey's Future in the EU," International Strategic Research Organization, October 2004, [Web site] www.usak.org.tr (accessed 13 March 2009).

and societal discourse and relate it back to the theoretical framework in order to support each argument. Turkey's national identity and foreign policy will be observed in conjunction with each other, chronologically denoting what it used to be, when it started to change, what it is today, and where it will likely go in the future. The sources used are from Turkish academics, journalist, and politicians, which allow one to better understand what Turks think in regards to their own national identity and their foreign policy. Then the input from these Turkish sources is compared to input from those who are not Turkish, but have a good grasp of Turkish culture through their own experiences and studies of the region. Finally, all historic sources will be measured through the use of surveys. Although the primary sources mentioned in the literature review are drawn upon heavily, a lot of other recent literature will be used through various news articles from different parts of the world.

F.   THESIS OVERVIEW

The organization of this thesis is as follows. Chapter II will give a brief history of modern Turkey, touching on Turkey's past national identity and foreign policy. Chapter III will examine when, why, and how Turkey's national identity started to change. Chapter IV will discuss Turkey's ruling party, the AKP. It will show how the AKP has helped consolidate a new dominant national identity, which has emerged and evolved over the last few decades. At the same time, the recent trends in the AKP's foreign policy will be observed and related to Turkey's dominant national identity. The fifth chapter and conclusion will consist of a recap of the thesis and a predictive assessment of Turkey's near-future foreign policy.

II. TURKEY'S BACKGROUND AND DEVELOPMENT OF PAST NATIONAL IDENTITY AND FOREIGN POLICY

Turkish citizens as a whole have been forced to endure multiple questions about what dominant group they identify with. Following the Turkish War of Independence ending in 1923, some have identified more with secular, Western culture, while others have oriented themselves more with Islamic culture. Because of this divide, some have described Turkey as a "torn country."[58] The origins of Turkey's initial dominant national identity must be reflected upon, in order to understand how it has moderated and changed into what it is today. By doing this, one can see how Turkey's past national identity was constructed, why it was created in the manner that it was, and the problems with it. This will mainly be discussed between the formation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 and the liberalization reforms of the 1980s. The political elite's actions during this time period will be examined and linked to the theoretical framework, which will support why Turkey's national identity existed in the manner it once did and how it corresponded with its foreign policy.

Before the Republic of Turkey existed, the Anatolian territory served as the center of the Ottoman Empire for six centuries. The Ottoman Empire was the largest, longest-standing, and most powerful empire in Islamic history, ruling not only over Anatolia, but the Balkans, and large parts of Arabia and North Africa.[59] It held the seat of the Islamic Caliphate, who served as both sultan and supreme leader of the Sunni Muslim world, which enabled successive rulers to have an influential bonding force among multiple ethnicities and cultures scattered throughout the empire.[60] It is no wonder that many in modern-day Turkey, especially those outside of urban centers, have continued to hold onto their Islamic values and traditions.

However, as the 19th century drew on, this over-arching bonding force diminished as nationalism spread throughout Ottoman territory and British and French

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[58] Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?," 42.

[59] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: A Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 4.

[60] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 5-7.

empires became evermore powerful. But it wasn't until after the Ottoman Empire's defeat in World War I that the Allied Powers of France and Britain exerted direct or indirect control over almost all of the Middle East, carving up territorial borders that balanced the power of the British and French empires and weakened the newly-established Middle Eastern states. However, French and British Imperialism ended at the borders of Anatolia, what is now known as Turkey. Turkish nationalists rallied around their most charismatic leader and military hero, Mustafa Kemal, in their War of Independence, rejecting the draconian terms of the Treaty of Sevres. By sacking the Greek army in 1922, Mustafa Kemal or "Ataturk" (Father Turk) forged a powerful unifying element among many ethnic-Turks through war.[61]

The War of Independence was a watershed moment in helping create Turkey's first national self-image. The war helped distinguish a sense of "Turkishness" apart from an "other;" being their enemies in the West, which wanted control over their homeland. "The more positively people distinguish their *ingroup* from the *outgroup*, the more their self-esteem rises."[62] Indeed, the Turkish nationalists military not only fought together, they won together. Their victory over Greece and successful defense of Istanbul from expansionist Britain culminated in the Peace Treaty of Lausanne in 1923, where Turkey was finally recognized internationally as a sovereign state. [63] By emerging victoriously and declaring its independence, the elites in the Turkish nationalist movement were able to gain respect, creating a sense of self-esteem among many ethnic-Turks, which was vital in helping Ataturk and his nationalist movement establish a Turkish national identity. "People's self-respect is bound up with the esteem in which their national group is held. If a culture is not generally respected, then the dignity and self-respect of its members will also be threatened."[64] Simply put, people are more apt to identify or feel a sense of belonging to a nation that can be proud of its accomplishments. With that said,

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[61] Erik J. Zurcher, *Turkey A Modern History*, I.B. Tauris, London and New York, 2004, 152–156.

[62] Jeff S. Halev and Elizabeth T. Morse, "National Identity and Self Esteem," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 1, No. 3, (September 2003), 519.

[63] Zurcher, *Turkey A Modern History*, 160.

[64] Will Kymlicka, *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1989. Cited in: Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests*, 16.

"self-respect theorists are right to make the connection between a secure national identity and increased self-esteem, at least for those who identify with a nation."[65]

But not all of Anatolia identified with the *nation* of Turkey. In other words, many people defined themselves as members of other groups that had been socially constructed in the past. In the wake of the War of Independence, however, the Kemalist era began through empowering only one party of government, the Republican People's Party [*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*] (CHP). "Neither the secularization nor the Turkification of the nation was negotiated with the people in a serious way."[66] Through the CHP's monopoly of power, Ataturk was able to embark upon a massive reforming campaign, with little concern for most of the masses outside of urban areas. These reforms marked a profound breaking away from the past, essentially shutting down cultural and religious practices that had existed for centuries throughout Anatolia. But why subjugate the entire population to these new reforms? Why break away from the past in such an extreme way?

The main reason for these reforms was to implement a strategy that would mend the new nation's economic, social, and security problems.[67] The Kemalists, many, of whom were educated in Europe during the late Ottoman era, believed that the best and easiest way to solve these problems was to secularize and modernize society in a European image and relinquish Turkey's traditional Ottoman-Islamic, "backward" practices. Thus, their age-old practices were then replaced with more "civilized"[68] Western practices. Because of this, Turkey began to isolate itself from another "other," that of the Islamic world. The Kemalists believed that by emulating the West, Turkey's economy and society could thrive like the West and, if needed, Turkey would have greater power in fending off the West or other foreign powers, like the Soviet Union. Therefore, Ataturk framed the national interest of Turkey in a European model, which was seen by the Kemalists as the most progressive and effective way of accomplishing

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[65] Halev and Morse, "National Identity and Self Esteem," 520.

[66] Dogu Ergil, "Identity Crises and Political Instability in Turkey," *Journal of International Affairs*, Vol. 54, No. 2, Fall 2000, p. 53.

[67] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 25.

[68] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism,"27.

modernity and gaining greater national power and prestige.[69] As a result, this developed a new dominant Turkish national identity more closely resembling the West than the historical and cultural image Turks had had in the past. Many have dubbed this national image as the "Kemalist" identity. However, it has been perceived that by embarking upon these reforms, "Ataturk performed a kind of 'cultural lobotomy.'"[70] Not surprisingly, these reforms were also met with much stubbornness to submit to these changes set forth by Ataturk's authoritarian regime. In fact, only the urban centers were subject to the fullness of Ataturk's reforms, while the rural areas were largely unaffected. "In effect, two Turkey's coexisted in uneasy harmony: an urban, modern, secular 'center' and a rural, traditional, religious 'periphery,' with little contact between them."[71]

Large minorities, such as the Kurdish population in rural southeastern Anatolia, making up about 20 percent of the Republic of Turkey, did not identify with Turkish nationalism or secularism. But Ataturk sought to invoke a singular national identity that would influence all Turks to unite and devote themselves to one sole image in order to amass greater national power, prestige, and security in fending off foreign powers.[72]

> *State-building nationalism* tries to impose a cultural homogeneity on citizens. There is an incentive for people to join the dominant cultural group; if people want to move ahead economically or politically, they must know the dominant language or culture. This is hardly a problem of the majority group… sometimes, however, minority nationals resent the need to neglect their own language or culture in order to prosper. When they do not assimilate, *peripheral nationalism* arises, as a distinct cultural group clamors for its own state or some sort of autonomy.[73]

Essentially, this is what happened between Turkish and Kurdish nationalist; albeit some Kurds assimilated into the Turkish discourse of society. However, most Kurds were forced to assimilate and, when they refused, they were mostly met with brutal

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[69] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 31.

[70] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 17.

[71] Angel Rabasa and F. Stephen Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, RAND National Defense Research Institute, 2008, 33.

[72] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 173.

[73] Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. Cited in: Halev and Morse, "National Identity and Self Esteem," 516.

repression by the Turkish military and police. Public use of Kurdish and teachings of Kurdish were forbidden. Many leaders of Kurdish insurrections were executed and about 20,000 Kurds were deported from the southeast to resettle in parts of the Western side of the country.[74] It could be argued that the Turkish hardliner nationalist, with which Ataturk sided concerning the Kurdish issue, felt that in order for their identity to be respected, they must defend Turkish "*dignity*, in which one's self worth is engaged…since, *dignity* rests on a 'common categorical identity,' when this is threatened or humiliated, so are the individuals who identify with this category."[75] The Kurdish nationalists seemed to have threatened the dignity of the Turkish nationalists (Kemalists) by challenging their idea of a unitary national identity. A splitting away from Turkey's national identity as perceived by Ataturk was seen as an attack on the nation itself.[76] This conflict of interest between Kemalist Turks and ethnic Kurds ignited deep resentment between both groups that still burns today, which will be elaborated on later.

But it wasn't only the Kurds who suffered during these massive changes. Although Turkish nationalism was one of the most distinctive characteristics of Kemalism, secularism was equally aggressively implemented as a core ideal to Ataturk's modernization reforming project. However, secularism did not mean a mere separation of religion from state, it meant abolishment of all previous religious activity and the complete control over existing religious institutions.[77] Kemalists felt that Islam represented "backwardness" and needed to be rejected if the country were to solve its social and economic problems. As a result, the Kemalist reforms attacked the *ulema* (the traditional leaders of institutionalized Islam), religious symbols and, most profoundly, put an end to the Islamic Caliphate. These reforms included removal of most religious leaders and university professors, removal of Islamic dress, and the adoption of the Western attire, Western clock, calendar, numerals, measures, and even the Latin alphabet. [78] These reforms were all seen as great steps forward in modernizing toward a European

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[74] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 172.

[75] Halev and Morse, "National Identity and Self Esteem," 518.

[76] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 173.

[77] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 181.

[78] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 186.

image, the region of the world that was thought to be the most powerful and most modern, and a move away from its "backward" Middle Eastern neighbors who were dominated by the West.

> On the one hand, the emphasis on the Turkish heritage, even if it was largely mythical, as something separate from Middle Eastern and Islamic civilization of the Ottoman Empire, made it easier to exchange elements from traditional Middle Eastern civilization for those of the west. On the other hand, it instilled in Turks, especially those of the younger generations a strong feeling of national identity and national pride, sometimes bordering on a feeling of superiority, in a sense psychologically counterbalanced the need to follow Europe.[79]

However, what emerged from the suppression of Islam was not entirely what the Kemalist elite desired. As stated before, much of the population, mainly the masses, greatly resented these reforms. By breaking away from the past in such an extreme way, a backlash was created through underground religious networks. Arguably, this suppression led to the rise of political Islam in Turkey, which had become more and more popular throughout the 20th century as Turkey became more democratic.

So how did Ataturk successfully carry out his Westernized reforms if they conflicted with the core interests of large groups of people, such as the Kurds and devout Muslims? One way is that the Republican People's Party (RPP) had a monopoly of power and if dissenters opposed their authoritarian power they would be crushed. Another reason is that he was genuinely liked among many Turkish nationalists who were the sole elite at the time. The masses had little, if any, power to challenge the Turkish elite and their nationalist and secularist stance. Nevertheless, Ataturk frequently toured the countryside to inspect their performance and he used more tools than simply the suppression of past cultural symbols and practices to help sway the opinion of many people and build a more modern national image through the Kemalist lens. "They (Kemalists) used the army, education, media, and art to consolidate Turkish national identity and attempt a clean break from Islam and the Ottoman legacy."[80] He, in fact, used history itself to influence the elite that the national image he was imposing was

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[79] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 191.

[80] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 26.

virtuous and legitimate. In other words, "history was rewritten to bolster the new ethnically based nation-state."[81] In order to "sell" his movement of a new Turkish state to the people and abandon parts of its Ottoman heritage, Ataturk manipulated Turkish history during the interwar period through an extremely influential speech. In "The Speech" (*Nutuk*) Ataturk rewrote history, glorifying the new nation of Turkey and its struggle for independence, while justifying his drastic changes, criticizing his rivals, and propping himself up as the leader of their movement.[82]

This process is quite typical of nation-building as seen throughout 19th to early 20th century Western Europe. For example, "Union with France was suffered, not accepted. The fusion with France was accomplished slowly and against the will."[83] The experiences in the market, schools, and military helped "sweep away old commitments, instill a national view of things in regional minds, and confirm the power of the view by offering advancement to those who adopted it."[84] Even though much of Ataturk's speech contained myths and a distortion of the past, it was widely accepted among the Turkish population and much of its content still exists in the history books in Turkish schools today. "The nation's common history as a rule has no more than limited reality, it is more the product of dreams and visions than the product of facts."[85]

This influential depiction of history was instrumental in supporting the new national identity the Kemalists sought to construct. Clunan adds:

> It takes history, in the form of historical memory, as a serious force shaping the aspirations of political elites. But it also take into account human agency and the present situation that political elites face to explain how the combination of political elite perceptions of the past and present shape current national identity and national interests.[86]

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[81] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 25.

[82] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 175.

[83] Eugen Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914,* Stanford University Press, Stanford, 1976, 486.

[84] Weber, *Peasants Into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870–1914*, 487.

[85] Hagen Schulze, *States, Nations, and Nationalism*, Blackwell Publishers, Malden, 1996, 98.

[86] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests,* 8.

By portraying Turkey's new national status and its history as a positive reflection on the people of Turkey and its leaders, Ataturk was able to build up a sense of national self-esteem and pride. As stated before, national self-esteem is vital in creating a positive national identity that people would be happy with and proud to be a part of. If Ataturk merely suppressed old traditions and displayed no positive reasons for Turks to be a part of their "ingroup," then no one would buy into their ideas or the image they wanted people to aspire to; Ataturk's legacy would simply die out. However, with this positive portrayal of history and the influential steering of Turkey's cultural modernization, Ataturk's vision was able to endure for generations to come. This lasting vision of Turkish identity also had large implications for its foreign policy for many years.

Constructing a new national identity for the political elite's own domestic political purposes naturally transcended into its foreign policy initiatives. After its victory in 1923, Turkey strove for the status quo with European states, and gradually fell in league with them after World War II and throughout the Cold War. It is important to note, however, that during the initial Kemalist era Turkey was isolationist and neutral during World War II. This suggests that although Ankara wanted to modernize in a Western image, it was also naturally cautious to ally itself with their former foes in the West. But, after World War II, with the emergence of the Democratic Party (DP), Turkey quickly aligned itself with the West to stave off a Soviet threat from abroad and communist movements internally. "Turkey's decision to fully integrate its foreign policy into the West was tied to Turkey's new Western identity constructed in the years following the Independence War."[87] This is shown in Turkey being one of the first nations to become a part of NATO and sending its own brigade of troops to fight alongside the United Nations in Korea. At the same time, Turkey's relations with the Middle East and the Muslim world diminished as they symbolized the "other" and the culture Ankara wanted to leave behind. This is exemplified through Turkey's willingness to become the first and only state with a predominantly Muslim population to recognize Israel as a state. While the Ottoman Empire had a bonding connection through Islam with the other ethnic groups throughout its borders and with many of its neighbors, the new

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[87] Yucel Bozdaglioglu, *Turkish Foreign Policy and Turkish Identity*, 4, cited in: Yucel Bozdaglioglu, "Modernity, Identity and Turkey's Foreign Policy," *Insight Turkey*, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2008.

Turkish Republic not only severed its ties with Islam domestically, but joined those in the West who had largely rejected Islam and taken control over the Muslim world.

> Constructing a new internal and external "other" for political purposes was at the center of Turkish identity formation. This identity, in turn has shaped notions of state interest. The Turkish elite identified the Islamic traditions and masses as the "other", and this internal otherness of "Islam" also was extended to the external otherness of the Arabs."[88]

Naturally relations withered, causing a huge rift between Turkey and its Middle Eastern neighbors that has existed for decades. Only until recently has this gap between Turks and Arabs been gradually narrowed; albeit there still exists tension.

However, as stated before, only a portion of the population truly respected this national image and the societal discourse it represented as being positive to their own individual interests.[89] While many nationalist Turks have fought to create this European-like national image, many have held onto their traditional religious and cultural identity, which they felt then and still feel represents who they are. "The determination of national identity, in particular after 1925, was made strictly at the level of the statist Republican elite and pointedly excluded the mass of society."[90] Therefore, the Kemalists not only divided themselves from the Middle East and greater Muslim world, but also divided themselves domestically. "Two versions of nationalism actually competed: secular linguistic nationalism and ethno-religious nationalism."[91] This is why Turkey has been widely thought of as a "torn country," with the secular elite versus the lower class masses of Kurds and Islamists. This set the stage for a domestic division within Turkey that continues to this day.

However, the Turkish masses of society, mainly composed of religious Muslims, did not lie at the bottom rungs of society forever. Turkey's national identity was Westernized and, because of this, Turkey projected its foreign policy toward a closer

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[88] M. Hakan Yavuz and Mujeeb R. Khan, "A Bridge Between East and West: Duality and Development of Turkish Foreign Policy Toward the Arab-Israeli Conflict," *Arab Studies Quarterly*, 10 (1992): 69–93.

[89] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 178.

[90] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 25.

[91] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 26.

association with the West. As Turkey's foreign policy aligned itself with the West, it was forced to come out of its authoritarian phase of government and become more and more democratic.[92] This democratic shift, starting in 1950 and progressing in the mid-1980s, enabled more upward mobility, organization, and social interaction among the lower echelons of society.

However, during this rocky 30-year period, Turkey's democracy experienced a lot of political strife due to a combination of economic turmoil and the significant rise in radical voices. The 1950s saw the emergence of a new elite in the Democratic Party [*Demokrat Parti*] (DP), primarily representing the masses, while distancing itself from the previous ruling class of intellects and military.[93] Apart from the Kemalists' old view to be neutralist in its foreign policy, the DP firmly aligned itself with the Western bloc against the Soviets. The DP's foreign policy closely resembles what it stood for domestically. This new elite seemed to fall in line with the United States, as a country that was secular but allowed religious freedoms. Prime Minister Adnan Menderes relaxed the secularist policies of Ataturk and, suddenly, Islam became more recognized in daily life.[94] This supports the argument that the masses never fully bought into the Kemalist identity and still maintained their cultural traditions of Islam. However, this was pure anathema to the Kemalist elite, who still harbored a significant amount of political power.

> To the majority of the educated elite (including civil servants, teachers and academics and officers) who had internalized the Kemalist dogmas and who themselves owed their position in the ruling elite to the fact that they represented the positivist, Western-oriented outlook, this admission threatened their cultural hegemony and their monopoly of the political scene and the state machinery. This explains why their reaction to expressions of even non-political Islamic feeling, was little less than hysterical.[95]

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[92] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 208.

[93] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 224.

[94] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 234.

[95] Ibid.

Even though Menderes represented the masses and their desire to incorporate Islam in their Turkish identity, it was not enough to ward off the DP's strong Kemalist opposition, especially when the country went into economic crisis. As Turkey struggled with its economy, the DP took more authoritarian measures to solve the upheaval in society. This did nothing except give the military, which continues to see itself as the keeper of Ataturk's legacy, enough popular support to take over the government through a military coup in 1960. Therefore, the next generation of secular and military elite representing a Kemalist image continued to maintain its power.

Soon afterward, parliamentary democracy was reestablished, but the military now had the power to extend its influence over government policy through the National Security Council. At the same time, the new constitution, which was overseen by the military and adopted by the state, was more liberal than the one before it. [96] Although this was a move toward better democracy, it also opened opportunities for radical voices in opposition to the military and secular elite to create parties and a significant following, especially when the Turkish economy floundered once again in the late 1970s. "The electoral base of the Justice Party [*Adalet Partisi*] (AP) consisted of farmers and small businessmen, but its policies increasingly served the modern industrial bourgeoisie, of big business. This left many of the voters disgruntled and they became the prime targets of the Islamic parties that were then founded."[97] Although most Islamic groups were outlawed, they still served as a venting and coping mechanism for the poor and the lower masses of society. "The religious networks and brotherhoods such as the Naksibendi and the followers of Said Nursi became a kind of "counter-public sphere' and the incubator of a more popular Islamic identity."[98] Once democracy was implemented in the 1950s, these religious groups grew in popularity and eventually emerged in politics in the 1970s. However, most of these Islamist parties have been unrealistic in their own aims. Some Islamist leaders, such as Necmettin Erbaken, have been seen as being too radical in their Islamic orientation, "reflecting many of the classical themes of mainstream Islamists in

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[96] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 245.

[97] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 254.

[98] Rabasa and Larrabee, 34.

other parts of the world."[99] Some even resorted to extremism, such as the Islamist left and the ultra-nationalist right, that resulted in multiple political killings throughout the 1960s and 1970s.[100] Thus, when the AP government showed no ability to suppress the economic crisis and political violence of the late 1970s, the military staged another coup in 1980.

From this brief overview of this 30-year period, one can see that Turkey's democracy had its initial problems consisting of an inability to deal with economic downfalls, its subjection to military coups, and the rise of radical and violent parties. However, much of this changed after the elections in 1983. New economic and political reforms were implemented and, gradually, Turkey came out of its slump of economic collapse and military control. With greater liberalization, a new intellectual, business, and political elite emerged from the middle and lower classes of society. What came with this new elite was a new interpretation of what represents a Turkish citizen; challenging the previous understanding of the official Turkish national identity set forth by Ataturk. Although Ataturk's legacy of a strong secular-nationalist identity lives on, another national image that revisits parts of Ottoman-Islamic culture has arguably come to dominate Turkish society today. The acknowledgement of this new identity came from the emergence of a new elite out of the lower and middle classes of society. This study argues that the genesis of this shift in Turkey's dominant national identity originated in the mid-1980s.

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[99] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 41.

[100] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 254–258.

III. CHANGING DOMINANT NATIONAL IDENTITY AND FOREIGN POLICY

Under the leadership of Turgut Ozal during the mid-1980s, Turkey's economic reform and liberalization was critical for enriching its democracy and enabling greater opportunity for the lower and middle classes of society. With greater opportunity and greater freedoms, these traditionally lower classes began to grow into a modern elite. However, in their economic and political ascent, these classes did not carry the same secular and Western ideals as the Turkish elite of the first half of the 20th century—the Kemalists. Rather, their ideals resembled more traditional Ottoman-Islamic values, while at the same time, reflecting a strong regard for political democracy, religious toleration, rule of law and a free-market economy.[101] The Ozal era, between 1983–1993, set the stage for the upward mobilization of this new economic and political class, which has subsequently established a new dominant national identity in Turkey today. The agencies of change during this time period will be noted in helping support the main argument of this thesis. Again, this thesis maintains that Turkey's dominant national identity has broken away from its Kemalist Westernized image formed in the Ataturk era. Rather than a purely Kemalist- modeled identity or a mainstream Islamist identity, Turkey's dominant national identity represents a compromise between the two; a unique blend incorporating both Western and Ottoman-Islamic images. This neo-Ottoman national identity has subsequently altered Turkey's foreign policy from one that was primarily only Western oriented to one that is open to relations on all sides of its borders, showing a stronger regard for the interests of the Turkish masses. How this first occurred will be explained in this chapter.

For most of the 20th century, Turkey sought to establish a state dominated economy, one that was predominantly focused on import substitution industrialization (ISI). Through high tariff barriers, Turkey directed its economy inward to protect the state.[102] Ataturk heavily focused on advancing Turkey's economy from the top down in

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[101] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 8.

[102] Alan Richards and John Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East*, Westview Press, 2008, 182.

order to make massive economic reforms quickly, so that the country could acquire the resources and capital necessary to ward off impending outside threats to the stability of their new-found state. The main reason for this economic outlook was to consolidate the political power of the state "center," and this tradition was continued on from the Kemalist elite as well as the Turkish military, which has always seen itself as the main bearer of Ataturk's legacy of secularism and nationalism even if that restricted freedoms seemingly basic to modern societies.[103] As a result, the means for upward mobilization of the lower masses throughout Anatolia did not exist, while at the same time a "self-perpetuating power group [the Kemalists] was born, linking bureaucrats, labor unions, and local politicians, that was far more powerful than any private capitalist power block operating in Turkey."[104]

As Turkey moved out of its isolationist stage after World War II and integrated itself on the Western side of the international bi-polar system during the Cold War, the Kemalist elite looked to further its Westernized image in its own economy and domestic politics.[105] However, even though the Turkish military supported a new constitution in 1982, it had "no real interest in shedding its real power as the sovereign guarantor of the state and Kemalist ideology in favor of a true civilian democratic government."[106] In response to this there was a strong domestic component, mainly in the form of Islamic groups and Sufi orders, such as Naksibendi orders or the "Nurcu" movement that wanted further democratization in order to acquire their own freedom of expression, have their needs recognized by the state, and increase economic opportunities for the lower and middle masses.[107]

As communication increased through advancement in technology, building of roads, and migration, urban areas became connected with rural society.[108] As a result, Islamic social movements spread rapidly and their leaders' voices penetrated extremely

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[103] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey,* 36.

[104] Richards and Waterbury, *A Political Economy of the Middle East,* 208.

[105] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 234–235.

[106] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 74.

[107] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 22–23.

[108] Yavuz, I*slamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 83.

large portions of Turkish society, urban and rural. "Since Islam lies at the core of the symbolic structure of Turkish society and is the main source of shared moral understanding, Islam is the repository from which Muslim actors draw values, critiques, and judgments."[109] Because 99.8 percent of Turkey is Muslim, albeit 30 percent of those are Alevi (heterodox Shiite) and 20 percent are ethnic Kurds with their own sub-identities,[110] many Turks have a strong connection with various Islamic social movements. The leaders and followers of these social movements are "motivated by value rationality and the need for collective self-esteem" in order to "generate aspirations of what the self should (and should not) be or do in the future."[111] The propagation of cultural values and common history by these Islamic social movements has served as the major agencies for the construction of a new Islamic identity.

This Islamic identity is *new* because by the late 1980s the most popular Islamic intellectuals were not the traditional *ulema*, but the young urban Islamic intellectuals and businessmen.[112] These prominent Turkish Islamic intellectuals and businessmen have stressed that "liberal political and economic order, including a marketplace of ideas as well as on goods and services, is essential if most Muslims are to be secure and enjoy tolerance and the opportunity to participate."[113] Rather than focusing primarily on revival of religion, these intellectuals have *used* religion as a building block for empowering the community of contemporary Turkish society so that it can challenge the state-centric ideology of the Kemalists elite and satisfy the needs of the lower and middle masses.[114] Moreover, because of mass communication, the number of diverse ideas about what role Islam should have in politics and society has led to the breakage of authoritative Islam.[115] However, this new Islamic identity that has come to dominate Turkey today did not come

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[109] Yavuz, I*slamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 23.

[110] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 6.

[111] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests,* 10–12.

[112] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 25.

[113] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 26.

[114] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 25–27.

[115] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey,* 92.

about until the mid-1980s because there was little political or social space for this identity to flourish in its statist authoritarian environment.

Until the mid 1980s, the military hindered any significant debates on national identity and the proper role of state *and* society due to the perceived threat of the Soviet Union, which desired control of over the Turkish Straits and the annexation of Kars and Ardahan provinces.[116] Internally, political violence reached significant heights in the 1970s between extreme left and radical right movements. These domestic threats to the state elite also slowed down any real focus on further democratization and economic reform that could enable Turkey's hidden identities to come out of the shadows and gain politically and economically. As a result, the military essentially dominated politics as internal and external security threats became the elite's primary concerns.

However, this all changed soon after the Turkish military's coup led by General Kenan Evren in 1980. In order to stabilize the hyperinflation in Turkey, which was one of the root causes of the political upheaval and the rise of radical voices, Evren advocated economic reform based on an International Monetary Fund (IMF) program suggesting an export-led growth strategy rather than the ISI strategies of the past. [117] At the same time, he reformed Turkey's secular political agenda by supporting a "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis." Instead of smacking down the opposition ruthlessly as the Turkish military had done initially, the military decided to tolerate, or even embrace, a certain version of Islam. This "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" was largely taken from the ideology of *Aydinlar Ocagi*, "Hearths of the Enlightened" laid out by a network of prominent intellectuals, politicians, and generals.[118]

The military's move to create a "Turkish-Islamic Synthesis" is not necessarily altruistic but, rather, a way to tackle extreme leftist and Islamic radicals that posed a significant threat to the state as those movements manifested at the time.[119] The synthesis was thought to serve as an outlet for the disenchanted or desperate population,

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[116] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux; The rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 28.

[117] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 69.

[118] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 288.

[119] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey,* 37.

while marginalizing growing radical movements. "By fusing Islamic symbols with nationalism, the military hoped to create a more homogeneous and less political Islamic community and to insulate the population from the influence of left-wing ideologies…and counter Islamic radicalism."[120] This ideology suggested:

> Islam held a special attraction for the Turks because of a number of (supposedly) striking similarities between their pre-Islamic culture and Islamic civilization. They shared a deep sense of justice, monotheism, and a belief in the immortal soul, and a strong emphasis on family life and morality. The mission of the Turks was to be the 'soldiers of Islam.' According to this theory, Turkish culture was built on two pillars: a 2500-year-old Turkish element and a 1000-year-old Islamic element.[121]

As with constructing the Kemalist national identity in the 1920s, a common historical element was imperative in constructing this new "synthetic" identity, or what has been argued as a neo-Ottoman identity. "Historical memory and the aspirations it generates are a critical determinant of what identities are accepted as self-defining."[122] By giving historic evidence that Turkey and Islam shared a special bond, people soon identified with a blending or "synthesis" of these two cultural discourses.[123] The support for this synthesis was then reinforced through state-sponsored religious education in public schools, as well as military schools. State-sponsored mosques also emerged everywhere in the early to mid-1980s.[124] After many years of suppressing religion, the military finally started to give ground to a major portion of Turkish society that had wanted to freely express their religion and culture. This synthesis paved the way for a number of unprecedented liberal reforms set forth by Prime Minister Turgut Ozal, starting in 1983.[125] Liberalization combined with a greater regard for Islam and Ottoman culture served as the foundation on which a new national identity was built. This was then disseminated by various Islamic social movements.

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[120] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey,* 37.

[121] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 288.

[122] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests,* 24.

[123] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 72.

[124] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 288.

[125] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 69.

The Turkish-Islamic synthesis would not have survived without considerable incentives to encourage embracing it. In addition to a common history, the other important source in creating national identity comes from people needing to "feel valuable, competent, and effective in order to build collective self-esteem."[126] This feeling of "collective self-esteem" in contemporary Turkish society was introduced when economic opportunity finally became available to a larger portion of the population, outside of the major cities of Istanbul and Ankara. Turgut Ozal and his Motherland Party [*Anavatan Partisi*] (ANAP) were the main bearers in bringing this economic opportunity.[127] They laid out a number of economic reforms needed to boost Turkey's economy or, as Ozal once stated, "to skip an age."[128] On top of this, he and his party implemented many political reforms that closely reflected the ideology of the Hearths of the Enlightened.[129]

Ozal's political stance attracted a large number of Turks, culminating in a 45.2 percent total vote in 1983—a much larger plurality than the other two competing political parties at the time. [130] He went on to serve as Prime Minister between 1983–1989 and then was President between 1989 and his untimely death in 1993. One reason for ANAP's popularity was that Ozal's party line attracted a variety of interest groups. The two major interest groups consist of the modern, secular, big business, industrialized bourgeoisie, and that of the Islamic farmers and small businessmen of Anatolia; two different sections of society, which had mainly been driven apart from each other during and after the DP's reign during the 1950s.[131] But Ozal was a successful businessman and large business owners liked his economic liberalization plans. On the other hand, he also grew up with a Naksibendi family background and was rooted in Anatolian rural society.[132] "He was the kind of politician with whom the average Turk could *identify*: he

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[126] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests,* 23.

[127] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 92.

[128] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 288.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey,* 75.

[131] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 283.

[132] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 75.

hailed from Malatya, a provincial town in a backward area and he was a self-made man, whose own career embodied the hope and ambition of countless peasants, squatters, and small traders and others self employed, whom he could address in their own language."[133] Ozal's charisma and effective policies allowed him to influence people in multiple sectors of society, rich and poor, secular and religious. As a result, he was able to pass a number of reforms with less resistance.

Because Ozal's policies satisfied the modern, Western-style bourgeoisie, there was less opposition to his opening up to Turkey's Islamic side of culture. These same policies invigorated a more comfortable attitude toward Islam, rather than the uproarious tone it had been received with earlier, which then helped propel a Turkish national identity with a more Islamic flavor. In addition, it is important to note here that Ozal was the first one to reach out to the ethnic-Kurds by legalizing the use of the Kurdish language.[134] Yet, the Kurds continued to be marginalized to a large degree due to the inception of a broadly defined anti-terrorism law, as well as penal codes that prohibit insults to the government, the nation-state, or any symbols of the republic, later becoming a huge barrier in the way of civil rights.[135] These same penal codes have also been used frequently by the military and police against the perceived threat of radical Islamists taking power, most notably in the removal of Prime Minister Necmettin Erbaken in 1997, as will be addressed later. Nonetheless, "Turgut Ozal's legal openings in terms of expanding the freedom of association, speech, and assembly and removing the state monopoly over broadcasting further facilitated the communication and dissemination of local and global idioms. As a result, Islamic movements constructed activist 'consciousnesses' to shape the sociopolitical landscape of Turkey."[136]

By working closely with the IMF and the World Bank, Ozal made sure that his economic reforms were being carried out completely. These reforms "reduced state intervention, alleviated payment difficulties, liberalized domestic pricing, rationalized the

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[133] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 75.

[134] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 292.

[135] U.S. Department of State, "2008 Human Rights Report: Turkey," [Web site] http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2008/eur/119109.htm, 25 February 2009, 1.

[136] Yavuz, Islamic Political Identity in Turkey, 34.

public sector, removed agricultural and other state subsidies, and banned trade unions."[137]   As a result, these strategies have yielded considerable growth as evidence from the growth indicators shown in Table 1.

	1980-1990
Real GDP	5.21%
Per Capita GDP (PPP)	7.12%
Exports (million USD)	16.11%
Imports (million USD)	11.55%

Table 1.   Economic Growth Indicators in Turkey 1980–1990[138]

As one can see from Table 2, trade increased about four-fold and foreign direct investment boomed. Although the considerable rise in inflation resulted in a multitude of economic crises during the 1990s, the overall state debt decreased at the same time.

	1980	1990
Exports (million USD)	2,910	12,959
Imports	7,513	22,407
Inflation	45%	60%
Foreign Direct Investment (million USD)	18	684
Domestic Debt/ GDP	45%	14%

Table 2.   Other Economic Growth Indicators in Turkey 1980–1990[139]

It was not only the old urban Kemalist elite who succeeded during this time. With greater opportunity and greater freedoms, the traditionally lower classes acquired large amounts of capital, which soon allowed them to effectively compete with the Kemalist elite. However, in their economic assent, these lower and middle classes did not carry the

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[137] Yavuz, Islamic Political Identity in Turkey, 87.

[138] Fatih Ozatay, "Turkey's Transformation and some comments on Turkey-Syria Relations," *tepav: economic policy research foundation of Turkey*, Ankara, 3 January 2007.

[139] Ozatay, "Turkey's Transformation and some comments on Turkey-Syria Relations."

same secular and Western ideals as the first Turkish elite- the Kemalists. Rather, their ideals resembled more traditional Ottoman-Islamic values, while at the same time, reflecting a strong regard for political democracy, religious toleration, rule of law, and a free-market economy.[140] This new class in Turkey has been recognized as the "synthesizers" of modern global ideals with traditional nativist Islamic ideals.[141] The combination of the military's Turkish-Islamic Synthesis and Turgut Ozal's economic liberalization set the stage for the upward mobilization of this new economic and political class with new identity traits, challenging the old identity principles of Kemalism. This can be reflected most effectively through examining the emergence of a powerful civil society organization called the Independent Industrialists' and Businessmen's Association [*Mustakil Sanyici ve Isadamlari Dernegi*] (MUSIAD) in 1990. This organization has combined Islamic groups, intellectuals, provincial medium-scale businesses, and new Anatolian industrialists to make a concerted effort to counter the state-backed Association of Turkish Industrialist and Businessmen [*Turk Isadamlari ve Sanayiciler Dernegi*] (TUSIAD), mostly made up of big business Kemalist elite.[142] Therefore, the pro-Islamic businessmen of MUSIAD support economic liberalization and privatization because that gives them the ability to compete in the market rather than remain in financial deadlock while the state and big businesses continue to reap all the economic and political benefits.[143] But because of Ozal's economic and political liberalization reforms, small and medium businesses and industries are hindered less in their success throughout Turkey. Thus, the burgeoning economic class represented by MUSIAD companies has continued to diminish the economic power base of the Kemalist elite, while bolstering its own economic base, independent of the state's control. Through large amounts of economic capital and gains, Turkish-Islamic society has acquired the means to play a powerful role in politics.[144] Representing a larger portion of

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[140] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey,* 8.

[141] Henry and Springborg, *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*, 212.

[142] Yavuz, Islamic Political Identity in Turkey, 92–93.

[143] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 30.

[144] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of Neo-Ottomanism," 30.

the population, this societal base has led the way in shifting Turkey's dominant national identity, not entirely Western or Kemalist nationalist, but mixing Western and Islamic identities.

Although Ozal's economic reforms had its problems—mainly that it left the economy *too* open, which consequently led to a number of scandals—it still helped free many of Turkey's diverse cultural and religious networks that had been more or less forced underground for the previous five decades. With liberalization, Turkey's "hidden identity within the Kemalist state"[145] finally became visible. Since most of Turkey's population did not identify with Ataturk's secular or ethnic-Turk nationalistic principles, a more elastic approach to the state's multiple identities has allowed the average Turk to be more comfortable with modern global ideals. For this reason, it could be argued that a national identity, which did not fully neglect historic Ottoman-Islamic culture, would have been a better fit for Turkish citizens outside of the urban centers after 1923.

Although Ataturk's legacy has helped Turkey become the most powerful, modern, democratic, secular state in the Muslim world,[146] his desire to unite Turkey's diverse population under one sole identity was impractical, especially as the country became more democratic. As a result, Ataturk's vision of a unitary national identity that did not incorporate any of its past Ottoman-Islamic culture may have been an insurmountable task due to the impractical assumption that *everyone* in Turkey, many with entrenched ethnic or religious cultural ideals, would welcome a vastly different identity than the one they were more accustomed to for centuries. "If historical aspirations and the practicality of a national self-image conflict with each other, the national interests the self-image espouses are likely to be moderated to make them more practicable."[147] Indeed, as further democratization took place in the mid-1980s, Turkey's national self-image was moderated after many years of forcing the public to conform to Kemalist ideology.

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145 Hakan Yavuz, "Cleansing Islam from the Public Sphere," Journal of International Affairs, Vol. 54, No. 1, Fall 2000, pp. 21–42.

146 Fuller, The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World, 5.

147 Clunan, The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests, 11.

Subsequently, as Turkey's official secular national identity increasingly came into question, its strong Western foreign policy began to be questioned as well. The previous chapter discussed how the Soviet threat dictated Turkey's foreign policy and its firm alliance with the United States. For a long time this foreign policy came under fire as the West, led by the United States, did not show considerable concern for Turkey's own regional and domestic interest. "During this period (1960–1980), the policies pursued by the foreign policy strategists in Ankara were less and less in tune with public opinion."[148] Public opinion was largely against this foreign policy for a variety of reasons, but only four will be mentioned here. First, President John F. Kennedy's withdrawal of the Turkish-based Jupiter missiles in exchange for the removal of Soviet missiles in Cuba in 1963 created significant doubt about NATO and U.S. interest in Turkey's own security. Second, the United State's demand for Turkey to discontinue growing poppy, due to concern over the ongoing global drug problem, was met with a huge negative response in Turkey. Even though Turkish peasants were using poppy to produce opium, Turkey itself did not have a major drug problem.[149] But the tipping point in the public's dislike of its Western foreign policy orientation came in 1964, when a crisis ensued between Turkish and Greek Cypriots for a second time. President Archbishop Makarios of Cyprus changed the Cyprus constitution limiting the autonomy of Turkish Cypriots. Although the Turkish government wanted to protect its Turkish minority from repression,[150] the United States, under President Lyndon B. Johnson, pressured Turkey not to get involved militarily for fear that it would bring the Soviet Union into the conflict. This resulted in sanctions against Turkey.[151] The Cyprus issue continues to be a major problem facing Turkey's foreign policy today. Lastly, another nagging concern since the 1970s has been Armenia's demands for the international community to recognize that genocide was

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[148] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 274.

[149] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 274.

[150] Turkey eventually invaded Cyprus in 1974. See Zurcher, 275.

[151] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 275.

committed in 1915 by the Turkish Ottoman military. Since France and the United States both have large diasporas of Armenians, pressure has come from both countries that Turkey dig up this fragile subject.[152]

However, this "Western" foreign policy soon changed when the Soviet Union collapsed. The Kemalist bureaucrats and military could not use the Soviet threat anymore as their main support for following a "single-track commitment to western policies."[153] Coincidentally, Ozal's economic liberalization reforms occurred around the same time that the Soviet Union collapsed. Thus, instead of maintaining an exclusive strategic posture with the West, Turkish state and society began confronting new economic and political interests on a more independent basis.

This is not to say, however, that Turkey abandoned its Western orientation. Indeed, Europe has always been Turkey's largest trading partner.[154] Rather than totally reversing the course of its foreign policy, Turkey diversified its course to make it more attractive to the developed Western world, namely the European Union (EU).[155] To be sure, integration into the EU has been a primary objective in Turkish foreign policy since 1987, although this commitment wavered in the mid 1990s under Necmettin Erbaken's hard-line Islamist leadership.[156] To make Turkey's geostrategic location seem absolutely essential to the EU as well as the U.S., it sought to build better relations with many of its neighbors following the dissolution of the Soviet Union. This is reflected in its "pan-Turkist" aims in Central Asia, a region with similar ethnic and linguistic background; after all Central Asia was once known as *Turkistan* before the Soviet Union occupied the territory and divided it into five separate states. Although the pan-Turkish aims were mostly unrealistic, due to the fact that Russia has maintained the strongest influential role in Central Asia, Turkey still made profound steps in building a partnership with the Central Asian republics through opening up a multitude of educational and religious

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[152] From the Economist Print Edition, "Unearthing the Past, Endangering the Future," *The Economist*, Ankara, Washington DC, and Yerevan, 18 October 2007.

[153] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 37.

[154] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 145.

[155] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 148.

[156] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 324.

programs, making over three-hundred political and economic agreements, while accessing Central Asia's vital energy sector. [157]

Not only did Turkey draw on its common culture in Central Asia, but also on its common Ottoman history in the Balkans. "The links with the former Ottoman domains in the Balkans and along the shores of the Black Sea, unlike those with Central Asia, are real and deeply felt."[158] When internal conflict erupted in Bosnia and Serbia's war over Kosovo, Turkey took a large role in stabilizing this region and protecting its large Muslim minority.[159] "This is the first time in Republican Turkish history that Ankara considered the protection of Muslims outside its borders as an integral duty of its foreign policy."[160]

In addition, Turkey mended its ties with former foes of post-communist Bulgaria, Macedonia, and Albania, making it possible to take on economic and political initiatives through the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and the Economic Cooperation Organization.[161] "The Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and renewed focus on Economic Cooperation Organization were part of Turkey's new identity search."[162]

All of these new foreign policy initiatives have helped Turkey bolster its national self-esteem as an active leader in the region, "gaining strategic depth, and through this foreign policy, Turkey started to act with a new identity as a 'central country,' leaving behind the rhetoric of a 'bridge country.'"[163] Not only has this helped Turkey gain considerable leverage to the EU and the US as a regional power player it has helped strengthen a dominant national identity in Turkey that represents a combination of historic Ottoman-Islamic culture with modern global ideals. By drawing on its common Ottoman past and culture with other countries, Islamic and non-Islamic, to aid in

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[157] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 332.

[158] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 333.

[159] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History,* 332.

[160] Ali Karaosmanoglu, "Burokratik Dis Politkayi Asmak," *Yeni Forum*, (October 1992): 45–46. Cited in: Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 332.

[161] Zurcher, *Turkey: A Modern History*, 332.

[162] Bulent Aras, "Turkish Policy Toward Central Asia," *SETA*, Policy Brief No. 12, 2008, 3.

[163] Aras, "Turkish Policy Toward Central Asia," 1.

diversifying Turkey's foreign policy and help further its national interest, Turks started to better understand what Turkey's new domestic, regional, and international role actually was, thus redefining what it meant to be a Turk.

However, this foreign policy role and the consolidation of this national identity were forestalled during the 1990s until the AKP was elected in 2002 due to a combination of factors. The Gulf War in 1991, for example, turned out to be a complete disaster for Turkey. Ozal wanted to continue leveraging its geostrategic importance to the West in order to strengthen Turkey's bid for EU accession.[164] So he showed firm support for Western powers during the war by allowing them to use Turkey's large military base in Incirlik.[165] But, rather than helping Turkey, this only reinvigorated terrorist acts from the Kurdistan Worker's Party [*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan*] (PKK) and a loss of about US$2 billion per year, which consequently helped lead to an economic crisis in 1994.[166]

Another hindering matter was Turkey's reaction to the economic crisis in 1994 and the EU's constant refusal to accept Turkey. These two issues allowed for the rise of the religious right in the form of Necmettin Erbaken's Welfare Party *Refah Partisi* (RP).[167] In 1995, his party won the largest plurality (21.6 percent) placing Erbaken as Prime Minister. [168]   As a long-time advocate of creating a "national (Islamic) order" and founder of the Islamist "National View" [*Milli Gorus*] Movement, Erbaken was highly anti-Western and sought to bring more traditional Islamic values and institutions into Turkish politics with the belief that Turkey belonged exclusively in the Muslim world.[169] Although a portion of the population agreed with this point of view, it was mainly the RP's campaigning for greater social welfare that propelled them as the dominant political party.[170]   As one can see, this was largely a reaction to the poor economy and EU

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[164] William Hale, *Turkey, the U.S., and Iraq*, London Middle East Institute at SOAS, London, 2007, 38.

[165] Hale, *Turkey, the U.S., and Iraq,* 48.

[166] Hale, *Turkey, the U.S., and Iraq,* 55.

[167] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 15.

[168] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey,* 43.

[169] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey,* 40.

[170] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey,* 44.

rejection. Naturally, Erbaken's more fundamentalist Islamist stance made the military and secular bureaucracy extremely nervous, resulting in their successful overthrow of Erbaken through a soft coup in 1997. This move, however, did not restore the military's former credibility to large amounts of the Turkish population.[171]

This is not to say that Erbaken's stricter interpretation of political Islam represented a majority view. Indeed, a more moderate conservative form of Islam reflects a greater part of Turkish society as represented by Erdogan's AK Party. "The results of the 2002 elections, in which the JDP obtained 34.2 percent of the votes compared to Erbaken's Felicity Party [*Saadet Partisi*] (FP) 2.4 percent of votes, confirms that the conservative-moderate niche is larger than its fundamentalist counterpart."[172] In this way, while the 1997 soft coup led to negative perceptions of the military and secular Kemalists by large parts of Turkish society, negative views also developed over a government run by a more fundamentalist Islamic political order that was seen as too weak and too radical. Therefore, a new and more effective political party under Erdogan was created to counter the state-centric government, which largely remained dominated by the Kemalist military-civilian bureaucracy and "corrupt politicians, businessmen, and media barons" from the death of Ozal in 1993 to 2002.[173] Finally, in 2002 Turkey saw a return to an emphasis on further democratization, opening of the economy, human rights, a strong drive for EU accession, and openings to new foreign relations through the AKP.[174] The AKP came to restore the process that was first set forth by Ozal.

As the pendulum of Turkey's national identity first swung toward a Westernized, secular, nationalist image from about 1923–1970, it swung back the other way in reaction toward a moralistic Islamic identity, between 1970–1980, in a more inward looking radical form. Since 1980, however, the pendulum has for the most part come to rest somewhere in the middle; albeit the more radical voices on either side still exist on the periphery today. The 1990s slowed this gradual shift in Turkey's national identity

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[171] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 16.

[172] Massimo Introvigne, "Turkish Religious Markets," Edited by M. Hakan Yavuz in *The Emergence of a New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*, The University of Utah Press, 2006.

[173] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 16.

[174] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 14–16.

through economic crises, war, and corrupt government officials. Nevertheless, evidence suggests that the majority of Turks have moderated their identities to one that implies a synthesis between Turkish secular nationhood and Ottoman-Islamic culture represented by the AKP. Subsequently, this new dominant national identity has altered Turkey's foreign policy today.

IV.   TURKEY TODAY AND THE FOREIGN POLICY OF THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY

In November 2002, the Justice and Development Party [*Adalet ve Kalkinma*] (AKP), led by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, received 34 percent of the votes and 363 seats in parliament, becoming the dominant political party in Turkey. Their popularity has endured over the last seven years for a number of reasons. The main reason the AKP has been so successful is that it represents the ideals of those who have grown to identify with the synthetic self-image that emerged out of the Ozal era. Now that it has been established what Turkey's national identity once was, when it started to change, and what this new identity actually entailed, support will finally be given as to how this identity has come to dominate Turkey today and how it has affected its foreign policy. This support will mainly be provided through the actions of the AKP and Turkey's response.

Even though the AKP had only been founded a year before the elections and contained many actors that were once strongly rooted in political Islam, it soon became the most popular political party in Turkey.[175] How did this happen? One reason is that the Kemalist opposition had repeatedly failed during the 1990s, leaving an opportune moment for the AKP. The Republican People's Party [*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*] (CHP), which was the political party representing the Kemalist since Turkey's founding, emerged as the dominant political entity after the "soft coup" of 1997. But a vast portion of the population was tired of the Kemalist's status quo and, therefore, looked for another political party that could represent their own interests. The incompetence of the CHP is most exemplified in their response to the 1999 earthquake, which had devastated the population. The government led by the CHP was seen as unprepared and too slow to react.[176]   Another example of poor leadership on behalf of the CHP was the fact that Turkey's former Prime Minister, Bulent Ecevit of the CHP, was old and ill before the elections in 2002. A few years before the 2002 elections, he started to make huge public

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[175] In August 2001, Abdullah Gul and Recep Tayyip Erdogan branched off of Necmettin Erbaken's (Islamist) Virtue Party Fazilet Partisi (FP) and formed the AKP with the help of the younger reformist side of the FP. See M. Hakan Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 79.

[176] Justin Huggler, "Turks Fear Ecevit is Losing Grip on Power," *The Independent* (London), May 31, 2002.

blunders, "At one time telling the astonished victims of a flood they had suffered an earthquake."[177] It was also believed that he indirectly caused the financial crisis Turkey experienced in 2001 as well, "Mr. Ecevit was the man who almost single-handedly caused last year's financial crisis by picking a very public fight with the President on the day the treasury was borrowing massively overnight to service debt."[178] To top off the unpopularity of the CHP, there were also corruption scandals committed by CH Party members in Parliament.[179] Yavuz sums up the public opinion prior to the elections of 2002 when he claims, "From the sudden death of Ozal in 1993 until 2002, the country was governed by a group of corrupt politicians, businessmen, and media barons. They used the military whenever necessary to undermine the 'radical Islamic' opposition."[180] This lack of good leadership and stability within the secularist run government allowed for a new party to step in, promising reform with an uncorrupted past and a refreshing new outlook in the eyes of the public: the AKP.

Rather than basing its party off of ideologies of the past, like Kemalism or Islamism, the AKP sought a compromise between the two. The AKP is a younger offshoot from the former RP and finds their older tactics as "immature and anti-modern in their criticism of the state."[181] Therefore, the AKP removed the religious right from the party in order for it to assimilate into the political center. [182] At the same time the AKP leadership reassured the Kemalists that it would maintain secularism. But rather than an "assertive secularism" that prohibits public display of culture and religion, the AKP has taken a more "passive" approach to secularism, which allows this freedom of

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[177] Huggler, "Turks Fear Ecevit is Losing Grip on Power."

[178] Ibid.

[179] Edward Luttwak, "Secular Turkey's Drift into the arms of Islam; With Elections around the Corner, the Ruling Party has Skillfully Manipulated the Turkish Public," *The Globe and Mail* (Canada), April 27, 2007, sec. A21.

[180] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 16.

[181] Cihan Tugal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism*, Stanford University Press, 2009, 23.

[182] Efraim Inbar, "The Turkish Elections—'Demo-Islam'," *The Jerusalem Post*, July 29, 2007, sec. Opinion, 13.

expression.[183]   By making this compromise, the AKP has been more effective in challenging the state leadership under the Kemalists because with a synthesis of ideas the AKP has represented a larger constituency. At the same time the AKP did not take a rigid Islamist view that was anti-West, anti-multiple religions, or anti-capitalist. Instead the AKP has actually used European Union accession, globalization, tolerance, rationalization, and the free market to empower its constituency that opposes the Kemalists. In this way, the AKP and its supporters have been more effective than others before in accomplishing their desires to reform the state and allow a greater regard for society's cultural need to freely incorporate Islam and its Ottoman past into their daily lives, without raising enough suspicions from the secularist establishment to overthrow them.[184]

By turning away from Islamism toward a blend between economically liberal values with culturally conservative and pious Muslim values, the AKP did a number of things. Of these things, seven will be mentioned to support the argument that a new dominant national identity has emerged in Turkey reflecting the synthesis of values listed.   First, it enriched portions of Turkish society, mainly the new Anatolian bourgeoisie, with the means to become more powerful than the Kemalists in the economics and politics. Second, and possibly most relevant for this argument, the effectiveness of the AKP's reforms constructed the collective self-esteem needed to support the formation of a new dominant national identity. Third, this synthesis provided inspiration to the lower masses, which has largely absorbed former radical Islamism. Fourth, it presented a return to Ozal's policies, showing that the national image first constructed in the mid-1980s was looked upon positively, as evinced by the AKP being the dominant political party in Turkey for the last seven years.   Fifth, by "synthesizing,"[185] the AKP garnered a larger and more diverse constituency much like the ANAP making it the dominant political party in Turkey. Sixth, it built upon historic

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[183] Ahmet T. Kuru, "Reinterpretation of Secularism in Turkey: The Case of the Justice and Development Party," edited by M. Hakan Yavuz in *The Emergence of the New Turkey: Democracy and the AK Parti*, University of Utah Press, 2006, 137.

[184] Tugal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism,* 22.

[185] "Synthesizing" as in blending modern global ideas with cultural nativist Islamic traditions and practices, see Henry and Springborg, Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East, 223.

aspirations in the form of Islamic and Ottoman heritage to help legitimize the national identity they have proposed. And lastly, because Erdogan and the AKP have become so popular, powerful, and effective in their policies, which has consolidated a modern Ottoman-Islamic identity, it has allowed Erdogan to be more comfortable with taking on Islamist policies as well as take more central control over the government, which could prove dangerous in the future to both Turkey and its longtime allies.

The first argument can easily be supported through the success of the new Anatolian bourgeoisie and pious elite represented by MUSIAD that emerged out of the Ozal era. Today they represent over 7,000 businesses bringing in combined annual revenue stretching into the billions of dollars.[186] Because of their economic dominance around the turn of the millennium, MUSIAD became the AKP's most powerful supporter, as well as an inspiration to the multiple sectors of society the AKP represents.

> The pious business community has established hegemony, that is, it has made its vision the vision of pious popular sectors and activists through the AKP. Almost all Islamists have come to the conservative position of the MUSIAD: support for unfettered markets, integration with the international business community, deregulation, privatization, and emphasis on conservative morality (deemed universal). Yet this is not only MUSIAD's hegemony but also that of existing dominant sectors of Turkey and abroad.[187]

Ultimately, the AKP has been more successful in chipping away the power of the Kemalists and the identity they espouse through the economic power its constituency (MUSIAD) has gained.[188]

These pious businessmen represent something positive for the average Turk to aspire to. They supply motivation for many Turks to follow a similar path and provide a self-evaluation of how effective their identity traits actually are. The AKP advocates these aspirations to become wealthy and successful, while express piety and cultural values at the same time. Clunan suggests that political elites provide "identity

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[186] Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe*, 183.

[187] Tugal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism,* 8.

[188] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 106.

management strategies" to "achieve or maintain positive views of the collective self."[189] Because the AKP's economic policies have proved successful for a large amount of people, these goals have become a reality for many or remain a possibility for many to achieve, creating a significant amount of collective self-esteem. In this way, not only has the AKP helped undermine the Kemalist's identity through having an economically powerful constituency, but also it has helped consolidate the national identity they propose by showing that it is "distinctive, positive, and effective in obtaining the collective interest;"[190] that of the AKP supporters.

By making these changes not only were the desires of the pious Anatolian bourgeoisie satisfied, but also a large component of radical Islamist and Kurdish nationalists were content, who are mainly associated with the urban and rural poor, making them more "moderate." "The AKP's ex-Islamists appropriated the strategies by which the Islamists approached the poor, while dropping belligerent metaphors such as *conquest*. Consequently they saw the AKP as their natural leaders against the elitism in Turkey, yet their combined movement did not entail a full spatial Islamization."[191] Many of these lower masses who were once extreme in their Islamist views now see that the most effective way to achieve their goals and living the "good life" as a pious Muslim is through taking advantage of the opportunities presented by democracy and capitalism.[192] For the Kurdish nationalists, the AKP has granted them greater voice by allowing them to use their Kurdish language in public places and allow them seats in parliament. "Erdogan uses all available means to appeal to Kurdish agenda by criticizing Turkish nationalism and presenting his party as the party of the excluded. The Kurds see the AKP as an anti-Kemalist and historically oppressed party—just like themselves."[193] To be sure, the AKP has been more effective in pursuing Kurdish rights than other Kurdish

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[189] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests,* 23.

[190] Clunan, *The Social Construction of Russia's Resurgence: Aspirations, Identity, and Security Interests,* 23.

[191] Tugal, *Passive Revolution: Absorbing the Islamic Challenge to Capitalism,* 54–55.

[192] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 84

[193] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 110.

parties such as the Democratic Society Party [*Demokratik Toplum Partisi*] (DTP), and especially the violent ultra-nationalist Kurdistan Worker's Party [*Partiya Karkeren Kurdistan*] (PKK).

The AKP has therefore maintained power over its rivals because it has made itself appealing to groups within multiple classes of society that are not represented by Kemalists politics or had previously not been given the same opportunities as the Kemalists elite. As a result of greater opportunities, many of these people that the AKP represent have flourished, or see the potential to flourish economically, while at the same time maintain their cultural identities. In this respect, the AKP is restoring Ozal's legacy in further supporting an open economy, human rights, education, and supporting the lower masses through social welfare reforms through the concept of *hizmet*, or "rendering social services in the name of Islam."[194] This offers another example of how attractive these politics became following Ozal's economic and political reforms. In reference to Erdogan's policies, Yavuz suggests: "He seeks to maintain the Ozalian philosophy of public management in terms of shifting the bureaucratic culture from the 'mission of civilization' to serving the people and improving their lives."[195]

This allowed the AKP to become very popular among a diverse group, much like the ANAP during the 1980s, because it encompassed the interests of multiple layers in society. "By democracy, the AKP means the process of determining the majority opinion …their conception of multiculturism means connecting the local with the global and the means by which a cross-fertilization of diverse ideas is possible."[196] Not surprisingly, this political stance has drawn a large amount of support from a wide variety of interest groups, that of "Islamic intellectuals seeking freedom of religious expression, Sunni Kurds seeking state recognition, the urban poor seeking social justice, and the new bourgeoisie advocating liberalization and the eradication of state subsidies for large corporations."[197] Moreover, just like Ozal, Erdogan is a very charismatic leader and people like his personality because the average Turk can identify with him. In last year's

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[194] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 83.

[195] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 83.

[196] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 91.

[197] Yavuz, *Islamic Political Identity in Turkey*, 68.

opinion poll, 44 percent of Turks felt that "The personality of the candidate," was the major factor in deciding their vote, while only 22 percent felt that their "political party" was the major factor in deciding their vote; other reasons for why people voted for particular candidates were at marginal percentages comparatively.[198] In addition, many are pleased with the AKP's social reform programs that they have launched throughout the years, such as building more new schools, hospitals, and paved roads.[199] In preparation for the next municipal elections on March 29, 2009, Erdogan and his wife have handed out toys to children and even refrigerators and washing machines to the poor.[200] Many people simply like the AKP's charismatic gestures and their social reform programs, which tend to help the middle and lower classes of society rather than the rich.

However, there is a significant paradox here. Although the AKP stands for deregulation of the economy, over half of its voters were either at or below the poverty line and desire more state intervention and welfare.[201] How can this large constituency of the AKP be attracted to a party that aggressively supports a free-market economy? It is within this constituency that the AKP's promulgation of cultural and moral idioms through a common belief in Islam towers over almost anything. Although this is hard to believe at first, practicing Islam actually provides significant opportunities. Before 1980, the only way to interact on a basis of mutual trust with other market spaces was through family and neighborhood ties.[202] Since Islam is a source of social capital, informal religious networks, such as the Gulen movement, have been extremely useful in facilitating more reliable and trustworthy market conditions.[203] Moreover, these informal religious networks allow the diverse communities within Turkey to socialize with each other and identify with each other on their common basis of Islam.[204] But what is most

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[198] The International Republican Institute, "Survey of Turkish Public Opinion: March 29–April 14, 2008," Williams and Associates, Salem, Massachusettes.

[199] The Economists, "The enduring popularity of Recep Tayyip Erdogan," *The Economists*, Ankara and Van, 5 March 2009.

[200] Ibid.

[201] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 108.

[202] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 97–98.

[203] Berna Turam, *Between Islam and the State: The Politics of Engagement*, Stanford University Press, 2007, 12.

[204] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 97–98.

important to the people within these networks is that they provide people with upward social mobility and act to help pious people achieve their goals economically or politically.[205] Significantly, these informal networks have also been instrumental in helping the AKP succeed through the personal contacts it makes with the local populous.[206] Thus, it shows that an Islamic identity, which is propagated by the AKP, is important to all classes in Turkish society for not only spiritual reasons but also for economic and political gain.

These interests are then supported through espousing historical aspirations in the form of Turkey's Ottoman history, which has been instrumental in constructing the dominant national identity that presides over Turkey today. Although this sense of Ottoman identity is most reflective in Turkey's foreign policy, domestically it has helped create a source of national self-esteem by portraying an Ottoman past that was victorious, powerful, and glorious;[207] something to aspire to in the future. Since the AKP came to power, this Ottoman identity has been propagated through art, literature, cuisine, Islamic movements, and politics.[208] "This ethnicized Ottoman tradition continues to have far greater resonance for the masses than the Kemalist-Republican construction, due to its symbolic power."[209]

Indeed, since the mid-1980s, the neo-Ottoman identity has gradually eclipsed the Kemalist nationalist identity in becoming the "national bond, the main source of identity, becoming the primary source of legitimacy for the AKP."[210] Opinion polls show that large majorities of people are quite religious. As of April 2008, a poll asked, "On a scale of one to ten where one is not religious at all and ten is completely religious where would you place yourself," 36 percent stated that they were completely religious, while another

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[205] See Berna Turam's explanation of these informal networks through the lens of the extremely popular movement led by Fetullah Gulen in *Between Islam and the State: The Politics of Engagement*, Stanford University Press, 2007, 20–24.

[206] Ibid.

[207] Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of the Neo-Ottomans," 34.

[208] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 95.

[209] Eric Hobsbawm, "The New Threat to History," The New York Review of Books, 16 December 1993, 62–64, cited in Yavuz, "Turkish Identity and Foreign Policy in Flux: The Rise of the Neo-Ottomans," 34.

[210] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 96.

40 percent stated that they were at least a five.[211] More interestingly, a study by the Bosporus University in 2006 revealed that 45 percent of Turks say they are "Muslims first" (up from 36 percent in 1999) and 19 percent (down from 21 percent in 1999) said they were "Turkish first." However, those same polls showed that support for religious-based political parties has decreased from 41 percent to 25 percent since 1999. "In other words: religion yes, but religion based politics no."[212] This suggests that by 2006 many Turks were at ease with the AKP's moderate stance on Islam. This greatly differs from other Islamist based countries such as Qatar and Sudan, or Islamic brotherhoods in Muslim countries such as Egypt, Palestine, or Algeria, which generally imply that politics and religion are one in the same. The AKP has stated that it wants to continue to separate Islam from politics, but at the same time lift the state's domination of Islam, which has been welcomed by Turkey's Western allies.[213] One can see that a moderate form of Islamic democracy has shaped Turkey's identity; an identity, which embraces a democratic state, but still harbors the need to practice its religion more freely and take pride in its Islamic history and culture.

By looking at Turkey's 2007 general elections, one can see that many continue to agree with how Erdogan is leading the government. The AKP received the largest plurality of 46.66% in 2007, which grew from 34.28% in 2002.[214] Figure 1 shows the majority of the districts that voted for the AKP's main opposition, the Republican People's Party and the fundamentally secular Nationalist Movement Party, lie mainly within the sub-urban districts along the Mediterranean coast, but not the major cities of Istanbul or Ankara, where the urban poor outweigh the rich. The outlying rural southeast is inhabited by mainly Kurds. Interestingly, the AKP has grabbed many votes from these Kurdish districts, which typically vote for their own Kurdish parties.

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[211] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 96.

[212] Owen Matthews with Sami Kohen, "Who lost Turkey?; It's a slow-motion 'train wreck,' and the imminent crash of Ankara's EU bid is a disaster for everyone," *Newsweek*, (Istanbul, 11 December 2006).

[213] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 51.

[214] Electoral Geography [Web site] http://www.electoralgeography.com/photo/maps/2007-turkeylegislative/municipalities.gif&imgrefurl=http://www.electoralgeography.com/en/countries/t/turkey/2007-legislative-elections-turkey.html (accessed 12 March 2009).
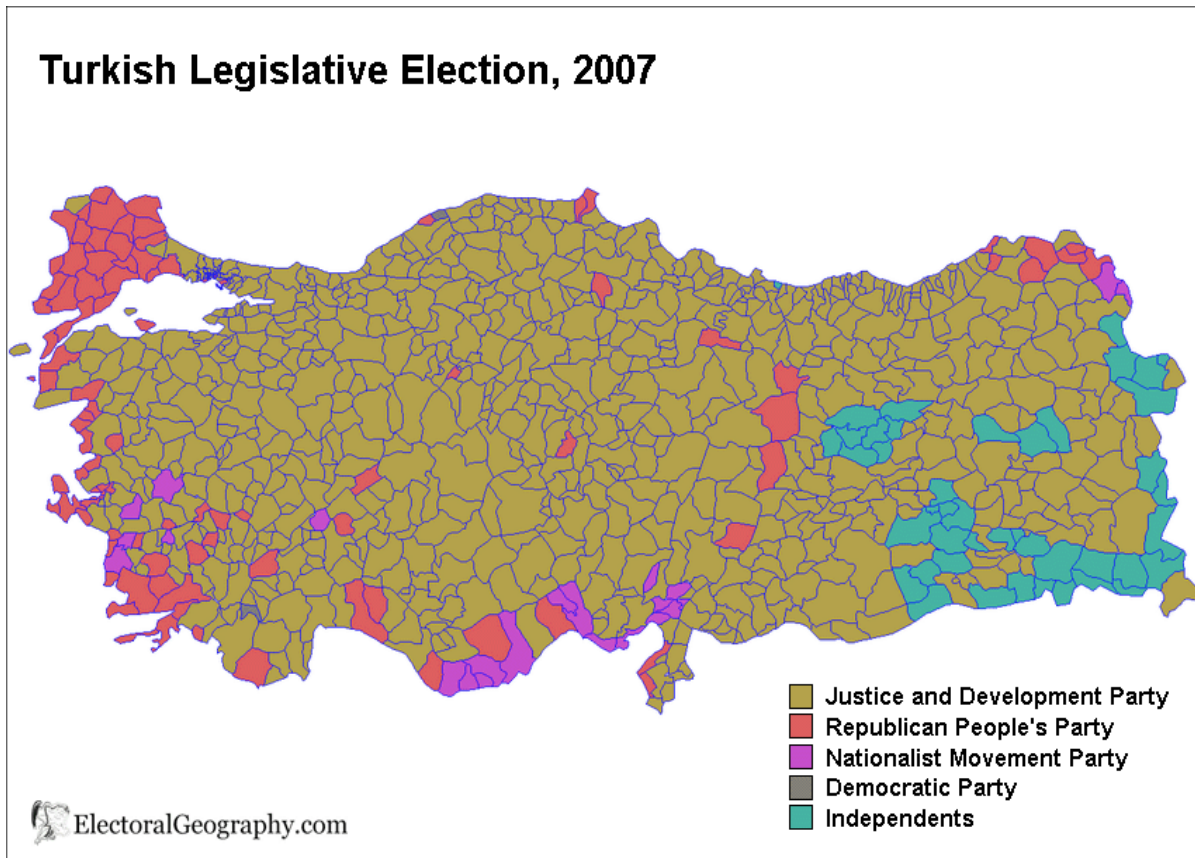
Turkish Legislative Election, 2007

Justice and Development Party
Republican People's Party
Nationalist Movement Party
Democratic Party
Independents

ElectoralGeography.com

Figure 1.   Turkish Electoral Geography of 2007 General Elections[215]

Although the Turkish military has always had the power to intervene if any political entity disrupted Turkey's secular democracy, they have very little maneuverability today due to Erdogan's popularity and accumulation of power. Currently, the AKP could be labeled as a "moderate" Islamist Party. However, recent developments suggest that this could change in the future. When Erdogan and the AKP first came to power they had largely separated themselves from any "Islamic agenda." But it is important to note that Erdogan once expressed hard-line Islamist views before he moved toward a moderate approach to Islam. In 1999, Erdogan recited an Islamic poem stating, "Mosques are our barracks, domes our helmets, minarets our bayonets, believers

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our soldiers."[216] He also claimed while he was the mayor of Istanbul that "Democracy is not an aim but a means to an end."[217] Due to Erdogan's rhetoric in the past, many have feared that Erdogan will surreptitiously use democracy to gain support in coming to power with the underlying intent of forming a government driven by Islamic laws in the long run. Until recently, this did not seem possible, nor did it even seem that Erdogan himself would want this, and maybe he still does not. However, Erdogan's authoritarian attitude, which has grown with his popularity, could potentially turn Turkey down a path that disregards secularism as well as its democracy if his recent authoritarian streak continues to manifest in the future. Quite possibly, the synthetic identity that the AKP consolidated in its first term could evolve into a more traditional Islamist identity.

So far, however, the AKP has only tried to give people a choice to express their religious beliefs rather than force religion upon them, such as is seen in Iran. "Despite trepidation on the part of the military and its Western allies concerning the 'Islamicization' of Turkish politics, the AKP did not impose Islamic law, but instead endorsed what can be described as a 'Muslimhood' model in which religious ethics inspire public service but overt religiosity is not part of an individual's public political identity."[218] Instead of a purely Islamic position, Erdogan and the AKP have referred to the concept of "conservative democracy," which espouses the need for pragmatic changes to undermine the Kemalist dogma that modernization means Westernization. Yalcin Akdogan, a senior advisor to Prime Minister Erdogan states that the AKP is, "a mass party at the national level, conservative in values, with an appreciation of past history, culture, and religion." Not that they are against economic development, technology, or modernization. Indeed, the AKP and its constituents largely *use* Islam to garner greater social capital or trust.[219] In turn, this enables them to gain more wealth and power, which is seen as equally important as being religious for the moral and spiritual sake.[220] Instead

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[216] Christopher Torchia, "Fears of an Islamic Agenda in Turkey," *World News*, May 3 2007, [Web site] http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/am/world/4772879.html. (accessed September 12, 2008)

[217] Ibid.

[218] Jenny White, "Turkey's New 'Muslimhood': The End of 'Islamism'?" *Congress Monthly*, November—December 2003: 6–9.

[219] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 97.

[220] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 97.

of being anti-modernization or anti-globalist they would rather maintain their Islamic-Ottoman heritage and cultural image, while at the same time adhere to modernization, globalization, and democratization on their own cultural terms. Erdogan proposes:

> A significant part of Turkish society desires to adopt a concept of modernity that does not reject tradition, a belief in universalism that accepts localism, an understanding of rationalism that does not disregard the spiritual meaning of life, and a choice for change that is not fundamentalist. The concept of conservative democracy is, in fact, an answer to this desire.[221]

Although this concept has come under criticism because it has little historical intellectual support,[222] it does show that Erdogan has attempted to bring the government's politics toward the "center;" neither rejecting the importance of secularism and nationalism nor religion and Ottoman culture. Rather, Erdogan has sought to enmesh and connect the ideas of the state with the cultural ideas of society to arrive at what he and the AKP perceives as the larger collective interest in the nation.

However, it would be folly to say that Erdogan and the AKP do not maintain a degree of Islamism. Two primary examples of this, which have been met with a large amount of controversy, is in the AKP's failed attempts to impose laws that prohibit adultery and end the ban of the use of women wearing headscarves in public areas.[223] The adultery law has come under enormous scrutiny because of the perception that this would be used primarily against women.[224] Indeed, the AKP's more conservative branch seems to have little regard for women's rights as they concur that women are naturally subordinate to men who are the only ones suitable for making decisions in the public domain; as a result, men dominate the AKP's decision-making body.[225] But Erdogan suggests instead that this law will "help women" because this law will "strengthen the

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[221] Erdogan speech, see the New Anatolian, April 26, 2006, in Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 92.

[222] See criticisms in multiple footnotes in Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 88.

[223] The use of headscarves by women is an Islamic custom that many women in Turkey feel is important in freely expressing their religion.

[224] Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe*, 145.

[225] Yavuz, Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey, 95.

family, thus strengthening the country."[226] Although this focus on "family values" seems virtuous, it actually is not by modern standards, because the "family" is mostly "defined in terms of patriarchal values."[227] As one can see, conservative aspects of Islamic politics are still present in the mind of Erdogan. On the other hand, Erdogan's initiative to lift the ban on women wearing headscarves is positively viewed inside and outside of Turkey. Referring to public opinion in 2008, 63% of people were "not bothered at all" by the use of headscarves in universities, hospitals, or by the wives of ministers and bureaucrats, while only 19–21% were "disturbed a lot."[228] As well, the international community sees it as one example in which Turkey is becoming more liberal, even though these reforms have been hampered by secularists suspicions.[229]

However, at the same time, Erdogan and the AKP have been slow to reform penal codes, which are notorious for their broad meaning and being used for political purposes, such as prohibiting people from "insulting Turkishness" or being a "member of an illegal organization."[230] If the AKP stands for democracy, it would aggressively promote all individual rights, not just religious ones. However, some of these less-than-democratic laws have actually benefited the AKP now that Erdogan is comfortably seated as a popular Prime Minister. Recently, it seems that the AKP has aggressively moved to eliminate large amounts of its opposition. One example is Erdogan suppressing the Dogan Media Group with a $1.7 billion fine due to its being highly critical of his policies.[231] It should be noted, however, that this media conglomerate has been instrumental in undermining any opposition to the Kemalist elite for the last few decades. In addition, the highly controversial Ergenekon investigation has been another example of the AKP suppressing its opposition. After alleged plans to overthrow the AKP-led government in another "soft coup" were revealed in 2008, the Ergenekon case was

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[226] Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe*, 145.

[227] Yavuz, Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey, 95.

[228] The International Republic Institute, "Survey of Turkish Public Opinion: March 29–April 14, 2008," Williams and Associates, Salem, Massachusetts.

[229] Deniz Gokalp, "From the Myth of European Union Accession to Disillusion: Implications for Relgious and Ethnic Politicization in Turkey," *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. 62, Iss. 1, 5.

[230] U.S. Department of State, "2008 Human Rights Report: Turkey," February 25, 2009.

[231] Erol Onduroglu, "Turkish Journalist Organizations Criticize Fine for Dogan Media Group," *Bianet News Center*, Istanbul, 14 September 2009.

opened to target the supposed perpetrators. Some see this as another tool used by the AKP to silence the AKP's secular opposition by targeting and imprisoning many high-profile secular businesses, generals, judges, opinion makers, political leaders, and citizens.[232] Much like the McCarthy trials in the U.S. during the Cold War, the Ergenekon case has turned into a similar political "witch hunt."

> It used legal loopholes to pass the media into the hands of its supporters, resulting in half of the Turkish media falling into the hands of pro-AKP businesses and the rest facing massive putative tax fines. Large, secular Turkish businesses fear the AKP's financial police and tax audits, while judges and generals have been targeted in the Ergenekon case for allegedly planning a coup against the AKP government. Illegal and legal wiretaps are now common, justified as necessary for collecting evidence for the Ergenekon case. Whether there was actually a coup plot, Turkey's judges, opinion makers, generals, businessmen, political leaders and plain citizens are fearful of opposing the government because they worry that their private conversations will be wiretapped or they will be arrested for association with the alleged coup.[233]

This is the first time the secular establishment has not been in a solid position to overthrow the government or had the necessary backing from the media or powerful businessmen to construct a formidable voice against their opposition. A lack of checks and balances to the AKP could ultimately lead to less democratization and more authoritarianism, only this time around it would not be Kemalist authoritarianism, but potentially a more Islamist type led by the AKP.

With that said, it may be a bit overly optimistic to pin a modern democratic label on the AKP. To be sure, due to his growing popularity, Erdogan has begun to centralize his power in a more authoritarian mode. All AKP members of parliament are expected to agree with the bills Erdogan proposes, and when they don't, they are investigated and discharged.[234] "Although the AKP has presented itself as a model of 'democratizing the party structure' in Turkey, power has eventually been concentrated in the hands of

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[232] Soner Cagaptay, "Surfacing Submarine," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 22 October 2009, [Web site] https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/print.php?template=C06&CID=1366, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy: Turkey.

[233] Ibid.

[234] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 102.

Erdogan and the experiment with internal democratization of the party appears to have ended with his increasing popularity."[235] Since the AKP has the largest amount of parliament members, many of the Erdogan's decisions go unchecked. Although many find the AKP's Islamic posture a threat, especially the Kemalist elite and military who have lost a considerable amount of power because of the AKP's popularity, most of the middle and lower classes (as well as the upper classes who benefit from the AKP) of Turkish society have requested this sort of leader-centric, majoritarian government rather than a strong plurality, which is vital for a stable democracy. As stated before, the personality of the candidate is more important to one's vote than anything else. In this respect, Erdogan's charisma may actually be getting in the way of furthering Turkey's democracy.

Due to this dwindling plurality within the AKP and Erdogan's authoritarian line, there is little stopping Erdogan from taking on a more Islamist policy. Recent evidence in the last year (2009) shows a return to Erdogan's more hard-line Islamist view exhibited during the 1990s, especially in regard to its former stance on religious tolerance. Although the AKP has helped make Turkey more comfortable with its Islamic heritage, it has not continued to show respect for other types of religious people, namely the Jews. Considering that the Ottoman Empire had always been tolerant of its large Jewish and Christian minorities,[236] the recent rise in anti-Semitism in Turkey actually runs counter to an Ottoman-Islamic identity. A Pew survey in 2008 found that 76 percent of Turks have a negative view toward Jews, up from 49 percent in 2004.[237] Many are angry at Israel since the Gaza conflict in December 2008 to January 2009, including the United Nations Human Rights Council, which has endorsed a damning report on Israel for allegedly committing war crimes.[238] Naturally, Turkey, a predominantly Muslim state, has been passionate in their response to the killings of fellow Muslims in Palestine. However, what is frightening about this development is that the central government under Erdogan

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[235] Yavuz, *Secularism and Muslim Democracy in Turkey*, 101.

[236] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 115.

[237] Soner Cagaptay, "A Trap for Muslims," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 25 October 2009, [Web site] https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=1341, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy: Turkey.

[238] Francis Williams, "UN Backs Gaza Strip War Crimes Report," *Financial Times*, 18 October 2009.

has actually fostered and encouraged an anti-Semitic attitude. Erdogan and the AKP have used propaganda suggesting that Jews as well as Americans are "evil." One such example was a state-sponsored cartoon exhibit in Istanbul's Taksim Square (much like New York's Time's Square) in February 2009, which depicted Israelis killing Palestinian civilians with American help.[239] Not surprisingly, widespread propaganda such as this has inflamed anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism throughout Turkey. Are Israel and the United States becoming the "significant others" from which Turkey's new dominant national identity can define itself against? This could be a passing phase, but it is important for policy makers to be aware of this development. The AKP's policies have been effective and influential enough to help consolidate the synthetic identity born out of the mid-1980s. Quite possibly, if the AKP continues to endorse this lack of tolerance, this synthetic neo-Ottoman identity could evolve into something much different.

A.   THE JUSTICE AND DEVELOPMENT PARTY'S FOREIGN POLICY

It has been established that there is a new dominant national identity in Turkey, which has been solidified by the AKP. As well, the implications this has had on the Turkish state and society have also been illustrated. Now a parallel to this change in national identity will be drawn with Turkey's shifting foreign policy. Without a doubt, the AKP's new foreign policy is one of the most significant changes seen from Turkey. Throughout its secular history, Turkey has shown extensive support of Europe and the United States through various policies, such as being the first and only Muslim nation to recognize Israel as a state in 1948, becoming one of the first members of NATO in 1953, allowing the United States to position its Jupiter missiles in Turkey against the Soviet threat, allying itself with the U.S. and United Nations in the 1991 Gulf War, and continuing to make a vigilant effort in its European Union accession plans.

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[239] Soner Cagaptay, "A Trap for Muslims," *Hurriyet Daily News*, 25 October 2009, [Web site] https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=1341, The Washington Institute for Near East Policy: Turkey.

Arguably, the most important facet to the AKP's foreign policy has been its robust commitment in becoming a member of the European Union. Along with its economic reforms, the AKP has made accession into the EU its main priority.[240]

> Pressure for change has come from within, from the ordinary people fed up with the failures of the status quo; it's also been motivated by the dominant issue of Turkish political life – that long pursuit of membership of the European Union. The idea of Europe doesn't appeal to everyone, but it has been the glue, which as kept the reformers together. The liberal middle classes already see themselves as European; most of the business community thinks closer ties with the EU will bring stability and increase trade and investment; Islamists hope reform will be accompanied by a more relaxed attitude toward religion, and the Kurds and other minorities see it as a guarantee of greater cultural freedom.[241]

According to a Turkish public opinion poll taken in April 2008, 61 percent think that "Turkey's membership in the European Union is a good thing" and only 28 percent felt that it was a "bad thing," while 13 percent said "neither."[242] This shows that many people support the AKP's strong stance on acquiring EU membership. Although a large majority views the EU as a tool for economic development and a reduction in unemployment (35 percent), many see it as a way to establish equal rights, social peace, decrease corruption, increase Turkey's international influence, and strengthen democracy.[243] These reforms, in return, agree with a significant amount of the population mainly because of the positive economic implications but also as a way to undermine the Kemalists' control over society. However, even with Turkey's hopes for EU membership, which the U.S. fully supports, Turkey's traditionally unwavering support for the U.S. has changed considerably in recent years.

Since the U.S. invaded Iraq in 2003, Turkey has viewed its relationship with the U.S. as less of a benefit and more of hindrance to its foreign policy goals.[244] The Bush

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[240] From the Economist Intelligence Unit Views Wire, "Trouble for Turkey? Lagging political reform may delay EU membership." The Economist, (18 February 2008).

[241] Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe*, 2.

[242] The International Republican Institute, "Survey of Turkish Public Opinion: March 29–April 14, 2008," Williams and Associates, Salem, Massachusettes.

[243] Ibid.

[244] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 160.

administration's interests were at critical odds with Turkey's national interest since 2003. The war in Iraq only emboldened the Kurdish movement to establish autonomy in Northern Iraq, which is one of Turkey's greatest concerns due to the fear of an uprising among their own large population of Kurds (about 20 percent of Turkey's population).[245] In October 2004, a Turkish think tank gave a foreign policy perception survey through a public opinion poll. When asked, "From which country do you perceive the most threat to Turkey?" the U.S. was ranked number one.[246] Thus, Turkey is less likely to yield to the United States' influence if it is not aligned with its own national interest. This is atypical of Turkey because previous ruling parties have placed a large emphasis on the strategic and economic importance of maintaining a strong relationship with the U.S.[247] Now the AKP has a more Ankara-EU-centric foreign policy, which focuses and balances strategic cooperation with a variety of powers between the EU, Eurasia, and the Middle East. [248]

This is not to say that the AKP has totally abandoned its ties and hopes for better relations with the U.S. Indeed, Turkey and the U.S. still share many interests and both countries can benefit if they work together. However, the AKP has recognized the benefits of its cultural Islamic and Ottoman past and has used this link to build social capital and better relations with much of Muslim world; regions that have long been looked down upon by Turkey since the fall of the Ottoman Empire.[249] AKP officials assert that this is not an attempt to "spread Islam" but only for the purposes of expanding strategic and economic foreign policies that are important to Turkey's interests.[250] A "return to history"[251] further supports the idea that Turkey has redefined the dominant national identity that attempts to combine its Islamic as well as its Western interests. Through developing this new identity, however, Turkey's stance has moved, and will

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[245] Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe*, 93.

[246] Sedat Laciner, "Foreign Policy Perception Survey: Turkey's Future in the EU," International Strategic Research Organization, October 2004, [Web site] www.usak.org.tr (accessed 13 March 2009).

[247] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 157.

[248] Ibid.

[249] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 8.

[250] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 75.

[251] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World*, 8.

continue to move, away from being alleged as a mere "Western wannabe"[252] and work more independently outside of U.S. influence. As Fuller has noted, "Turkey is going to be Turkey and not a 'US ally' in the way it perceives its interests."[253]

Soon after the AKP won its election in 2002, its first gesture of a new independent form of foreign policy was seen in its firm rejection of the U.S. 4th Infantry Division that would enable U.S. troops to invade Iraq from Turkish soil. Without Saddam Hussein in power, Turkish representatives feared that this would result in Iraq losing its grip on the Kurdish cities of Kirkuk and Mosul (Mosul having large oil reserves), which could be used by the Kurds to establish the center of a Kurdish state. Therefore, Turkey was much opposed to the U.S. invasion, which would ultimately lead to a "[Turkish] head-on collision with the Iraqi Kurds."[254] It was not just the AKP who were concerned about the U.S. invasion; even the Turkish military feared "a war within a war" when the U.S. armed the *peshmerga*, the Kurdish militia, with heavy weaponry.[255] As a result, 68 members of the AKP opposed going to war and another 32 abstained in their vote in parliament.[256] Aiding the U.S. invasion was simply not in Turkey's interest. Emin Sirin, one of the AKP lawmakers who disagreed with Turkey's involvement in Iraq said, "We don't like how we were pushed around by the Americans. They seem to think that we could be bought off, but we had real security concerns about what Iraq would look like after Saddam. They never addressed those concerns."[257]

However, many deputies within the Turkish parliament supported involvement in the Iraq war, including Prime Minister Abdullah Gul and AKP party leader Recep Tayyip Erdogan. They did this to show parliament's ongoing support for the U.S., as well as their fear that Turkey would be powerless in Iraq's rebuilding process. The Turkish parliament's lack of a mere three votes in support of going to war is a testament to this.

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[252] Rabasa and Larrabee, *The Rise of Political Islam in Turkey*, 6.

[253] Graham Fuller, email received regarding Washington Post article, "Obama trip to include Turkey visit," 8 March 2009.

[254] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 97.

[255] Quoted, NTV Web site, 29 October 2005, On other points see *Hurriyet*, 27 October 2005.

[256] Hale, *Turkey, the U.S., and Iraq*, 113.

[257] Richard Boudreaux, "The Reasons Turkey Rejected the U.S.," *Los Angeles Times*, (3 March 2003).

But the end result was Turkey rejecting the U.S. 4th Infantry Division and the U.S. lost its strategic ability to launch a northern assault from Turkey's southern border. Even though the U.S. may not have been as empathetic and foresighted in its concerns toward Turkey, it is important to note that the vast majority of the AKP opposed support of the United States.

Frictional ties only increased later that year when Turkish Special Forces were arrested by U.S. troops outside of Kirkuk on July 4, 2003. They were disarmed and detained with sacks over their heads for reportedly being involved in "disturbing behavior."[258] This caused a huge uproar among the Turkish population. Gunduz Aktan, a retired diplomat and newspaper columnist, reflects Turkey's common attitude, "Have Americans forgotten how they felt when they saw their diplomats, eyes bandaged, dragged out of the [US embassy in] Tehran during Khomeini's revolution? Turks today feel the same thing about US treatment of their soldiers. Like Americans, they too will not forget."[259] Today there are even Turkish books and movies available that are based on this incident creating continued distain and distrust toward the United States.[260] Ultimately, the beginning stages of Operation Iraqi Freedom augmented the already tense relations between the U.S. and Turkey.

Although U.S.-Turkey relations are not completely shattered, Turkey has presently realized that seeking other partnerships and relations outside of U.S. friendly allies could benefit them more than simply aligning their foreign policy initiatives with the U.S. This is prevalent in the AKP's newfound proposals to court better ties with the Middle East. This initiative first started with Syria, a country that has always had hostile relations with the U.S.[261] This may soon change, however, with President Obama's vision of using more diplomacy with these countries rather than simply isolating them. Nevertheless, Turkey will arguably continue to offer peaceful political and economic

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[258] Nicholas Birch, "Detentions Strain Already Tense U.S.- Turkey Relations" *The Christian Science Moniter*, July 15, 2003.

[259] Birch, "Detentions Strain Already Tense U.S.- Turkey Relations."

[260] Morris, *The New Turkey: The Quiet Revolution on the Edge of Europe,* 235.

[261] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 93.

cooperation with Syria.[262] When Erdogan visited Syria in April 2008, he called on the Syrians to follow Turkey's economic reform model, reminding them how their national income had increased from $230 billion to $659 billion since 2003. He stated, "This can easily be done in Syria…We are willing to put our hand in yours!"[263] In Syria, Erdogan is also seen as bringing fair balance to negotiations with the ongoing Syrian-Israeli disputes.

Erdogan has disagreed with Israeli policies on a number of occasions and has never shied away from letting all know his discontent. Most recently, during the 2009 Davos Conference, Erdogan passionately responded to Israeli President Shimon Peres' comments regarding Israeli attacks in Gaza and abruptly walked out. In his reply to Peres, Erdogan remarked, "You kill people, I remember the children who died on beaches. I remember two former prime ministers who said they felt very happy when they were able to enter Palestine on tanks."[264] When Erdogan got back to Ankara, jubilant crowds warmly received him claiming that he was the "Conqueror of Davos."[265] This shows that many Turks are pleased with the manner in which their Prime Minister has conducted himself regarding his new policy toward Israel.

But there is a significant problem in the moralistic line Erdogan and the AKP have taken toward Israel, Jews, and the United States. Considering Syria is a known abuser of human rights, how can they chastise Israel and sing its praises of Syria?[266] This anti-Israeli popular opinion is exemplified further in a Turkish TV show that recently showed Israel as killing innocent Palestinian civilians. As a result of the increased tensions between the two long-time allies, Erdogan has postponed, and even threatened to cancel, the October 2009 joint military exercises with Israel that have been

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[262] Sami Moubayed, "Turkish-Syrian Relations: The Erdogan Legacy," *SETA Foundation for Political, Economic, and Social Research*, accessed through *Today's Zaman*, (Ankara, 31 October 2008).

[263] Moubayed, "Turkish-Syrian Relations: The Erdogan Legacy.".

[264] CBS/AP, "Turkish PM Welcomed Home After Israel Flap," Davos, Switzerland, 30 January 2009.

[265] Ibid.

[266] Soner Cagaptay, "Is Turkey Leaving the West?," *Foreign Affairs*, [Web site] https://www.washingtoninstitute.org/templateC06.php?CID=1367 The Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 26 October 2009.

posted in Turkey annually since 1996.[267] Turkey's Foreign Minister Ahmet Davotoglu has stated, "Our attitude will be unchanged as long as the tragic events in Gaza continue."[268] On the other hand, the AKP's expression of solidarity with Syria and Palestine has been much to the displeasure of Israel and the U.S. Bettering relations with Syria, despite United States' policy, signals a breaking away from Turkey's traditional path of foreign policy. Following his decision to postpone Turkish-Israeli-U.S. military exercises, Erdogan stated, "Anyone who exercises political power has to take account of public opinion…I can't just put the calls from the public to one side, it's a question of sincerity…I want people to know that Turkey is a powerful country which makes its own decisions. We don't take orders from anyone."[269] Although Turkey could still remain partners with Israel, if it continues to take a more assertive stance on the Palestinian or Syrian side of Israeli-Palestinian negotiations, Turkey will not likely be able to continue taking a mediator role, which may prove not as important to them as gaining a more leader-like role among Muslim states in the Middle East and North Africa.

On the other side of its border, Turkey has extended its political and economic ties to Iran, which serves as further evidence that the AKP is making a strong effort to balance its voice throughout the Middle East. In spite of the United States strong discouragement, Turkey has opened up to Iran through various energy and security plans. One significant example is an extension from Iran to the Nabucco pipeline, which would export Iranian oil and gas through Ankara to Europe. The EU fully supports Iranian energy being transported through Turkey so that it is not completely dependent on Russia.[270] Although the U.S. is extremely opposed to this project, Turkey is nevertheless pursuing it through offering to help fund and build the infrastructure needed.[271] In addition, Turkey has also told Tehran that they would not allow Israel its airspace to conduct an attack on Iran. Whether the U.S. likes it or not, Turkey relies on Iran for their

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[267] Aljazeera, "Israel anger over Turkish TV show," *Aljazeera*, October 15, 2009.

[268] Financial Times, "Turks Portrayal of Brutality Strains Old Alliance," *Financial Times,* October 18, 2009.

[269] Aljazeera, "Israel anger over Turkish TV show," *Aljazeera*, October 15, 2009.

[270] Fuller, *The New Turkish Republic: Turkey as a Pivotal State in the Muslim World,* 112.

[271] Oil & Gas Eurasia, "Iran and Turkmenistan to Pump Gas to Europe," Source: *Reuters*, [Web site] http://oil&gaseurasia.wordpress.com (17 July 2007).

natural gas and they will continue to make economic and security deals as long as it is in line with its national interest. Although the AKP is not always pleased with Iranian leadership, it is willing to draw upon the two countries cultural and historical ties in the hopes of better stable and peaceful relations. President Gul was able to play on this when he publicly stated to Iran in reference to their nuclear energy projects, "All countries must open themselves up to internal criticism and self-examination in keeping with Islamic values."[272] However, more recently Erdogan has taken a protective role toward Iran and their president, Mahmoud Ahmadinajad, saying "There is no doubt he is our friend. We have kept very good relations and we have no difficulty at all."[273] In spite of Iran's attempts to build nuclear weapons, seen as extremely belligerent by the West, Erdogan stated that it is "unfair that Iran be told to not produce nuclear weapons from those who already have them."[274] But Turkey is a NATO country and supporting Iran's nuclear program goes against NATO's nuclear defense policy. "As Erdogan questions why the United States possesses nuclear weapons, some of which are deployed in Turkey, he first of all contradicts NATO policy."[275] One can see that Turkey's relations with its southern neighbors Syria, Palestine, and Iran have warmed significantly, while relations with its traditional allies, the United States, Israel, and even NATO have cooled.

Turkey is of course not limited to ingratiating itself with the southern countries mentioned above. It has also reached out to other countries in the Middle East, North Africa, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. "The latest developments reaffirm the role that this particular government wants to give Turkey and Turkish foreign policy- as the big brother of Islamic countries."[276] Since the AKP came to power, exports to the Middle East and North Africa have increased sevenfold to $31 billion in 2008.[277] Because of its

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[272] Oil & Gas Eurasia, "Iran and Turkmenistan to Pump Gas to Europe."

[273] Hurriyet Daily News, "Turkish PM: West Treats Iran Unfairly," *Hurriyet*, 26 October 2009.

[274] Ibid.

[275] Sedat Ergin, "Is Erdogan Challenging the West?," *Hurriyet*, Istanbul, 30 October 2009.

[276] Sinan Ulgen of Edam think tank in the *Financial Times*, "Turks Portrayal of Brutality Strains Old Alliance," *Financial Times,* October 18, 2009.

[277] See more Turkish investment plans in The Economist print edition, "Looking East and South," *The Economist*, Istanbul, 29 October 2009.

common cultural ground with the Middle East and Turkey's strong economy, the U.S. sees Turkey as being one of the primary facilitators of stabilization when it leaves Iraq.

Additionally, Turkey has revamped its relations in the Caucasus and Central Asia. Most notably is Turkey's construction of Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan (BTC) pipeline and its planned connections to this pipeline, such as the Nabucco pipeline that will stretch from Erzerum in central Anatolia to Vienna. Other pipeline plans consist of Turkey connecting to Turkmenistan, Egypt, Iran, and Iraq.[278] Not only does this diversify Turkey's energy resources but it also makes them a central hub between east, west, north, and south as the primary energy intermediary. Although Turkey's relations with its regional neighbors go beyond pipeline politics, these energy plans show significant developments in bettering its ties with new partners, many of which had been previously ignored or shunned.

In this way, Turkey's Ottoman legacy and Islamic culture in its new foreign policy has served as a useful link to integrating more trade, opening more markets, and bettering security relations with its neighbors. This is important to Turkey, but beyond that, the consequence of these relations present an opportunity for generating regional peace and stability; albeit as long as Turkey discontinues its positive opinion of Iran's nuclear weapons program.[279] Although Turkey's foreign policy has drifted away from a U.S.-centric mindset, Turkey still desires to work together with the U.S. to solve issues such as Iraq, Israeli- Syria, Israeli-Palestine, Armenian-Azerbaijani dispute over the Nagorno-Karabakh territory, security of energy sources, terror, and democratization and stability of the Middle East.[280] However, all of these essential issues require more than Turkey's good will. Turkey will also need the United States' help in attaining many of its goals.[281]

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[278] The Economist print edition, "Looking East and South," *The Economist*, Istanbul, 29 October 2009.

[279] Kaitlin MacKenzie, "Turkey's New Middle East Approach," International Strategic Research Center, [Web site] www.usak.org.tr, (Ankara, 18 February 2009).

[280] Ibid.

[281] MacKenzie, "Turkey's New Middle East Approach."

In order to enable decision makers to adequately understand and predict Turkish foreign policy decisions, the United States needs to continuously analyze Turkey's internal politics with the context of Turkish national identity.   This starts through examining the Turkish ruling party's political and economic reforms and how the Turkish public reacts and identifies with these reforms. Since the U.S. has many interests in the Middle East and Eurasia, it is crucial that the U.S. understands Turkey's evolving identity because it reflects much of its changing foreign policy, which affects the U.S. and its own goals in the region.

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V.   CONCLUSION AND FUTURE ASSESSMENT

Belonging or identifying with a group is a powerful sociological experience that can significantly impact the consciousness and thus the interests and actions taken by individuals. Although this idea of "collective identity" can be seen at various levels, it has an especially important effect at the national level. National identity is important because the group's interest at the national stage affects the policies of the state.[282] However, since the Turkish Republic was founded in 1923, its national identity has been divided; many did not even identify with the nation. Only recently has this societal fragmentation been melded together more broadly. To a large extent, this is a result of the current ruling party, the AKP, representing a national image in which Turks can take greater comfort, confidence, pride, and satisfaction: that of the neo-Ottoman identity.

From 1923 to 1980, the Kemalist aims to base the sole national identity on the prescriptions of Ataturk dominated the country. This was not necessarily because the majority of people imagined themselves under these nationalistic or Kemalist characteristics, rather it was more a result of the statist power that resided in the Kemalist elite and military, which prohibited others from publically identifying with anything other than Kemalism.[283] By 1980, though, the overarching power of the state started to wane as democracy became more prevalent. The underground networks of society that grew throughout the 1960s and 1970s were then able to voice their opinions openly, organize, and take action more freely. During the 1980s, these groups, which mainly consisted of the lower and middle masses, still had little power to undermine the Kemalist state ideology. However, by using the economic and political liberalization reforms of Turgut Ozal during the mid-1980s, these lower and middle classes amassed more power through gaining wealth and capital, forming a new bourgeoisie. They became what has been labeled as the new Anatolian bourgeoisie.[284]

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[282] See Chapter I: Literature and Theory.

[283] See Chapter II.

[284] See Chapter III.

In their economic, social, and political ascent the masses of society carried with them an identity that was quite different from their rival, the Kemalists. This identity reflects an image that incorporates, rather than prohibits, a degree of Islamic practices and Turkey's Ottoman culture and history. Drawing on lessons from Sufi orders such as Naksibendi, the followers of Said Nursi, or most recently the guidance of the socio-political Islamic movement inspired by Fetullah Gulen,[285] the interests of average Turks fell more in line with the values prescribed by these Islamic teachings. At the same time, these Islamic teachings did not have a fundamentalist mentality, but supported modernity, tolerance of other religions, democracy, and a free market economy. Islamic intellectuals combined with the new Anatolian bourgeoisie promoted a synthesis between Ottoman-Islamic traditions with modern global ideas, many of which are seen as effective in advancing Western countries. This synthesis of values and traditions reflects a new identity that has grown into a dominant national identity today; what has been described as the "neo-Ottoman" identity.[286] Turks seemed to identify with a neo-Ottoman image more so than the Kemalist identity because it reflects parts of their Ottoman traditions and history, which are still deeply felt. This is represented in the largest portion of the Turkish population taking pride in Islamic practices and Ottoman aesthetics and symbols, such as art, literature, music, and food. In addition, this identity was effective in creating a sense of self-esteem among those who associated themselves with these principles. Many of these Turks that identified with a neo-Ottoman image became successful or prosperous and provided a practical image toward which many would want to aspire.[287]

As a result of the historical aspirations and effectiveness of neo-Ottomanism, the neo-Ottoman identity grew until it became solidified in 2002 with the election of the AKP as the dominant political party. As the neo-Ottoman identity was consolidated as the dominant national identity in Turkey, this change in identity paralleled a change in Turkey's foreign policy. This has become apparent in the AKP-led government's new initiatives to court better ties with its southern and eastern neighbors from which it has either a historical link or a religious link. As a more powerful economic player among

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[285] See Berma Turam, *Between Islam and the State*, 23.

[286] See Chapter I: Hypothesis and Problems.

[287] See Chapter IV.

these countries, Turkey has sought to embolden itself as a regional leader. However, just as the neo-Ottoman identity places considerable importance on historical, religious, and cultural ideas, it also maintains modern and global ideas. Thus, Turkey has not turned its back on the most modern and advanced states that exist in the West. Indeed, the AKP remains a member of NATO and a strong supporter of accession in the EU.[288]

Nevertheless, the shape of this synthetic identity could change in the near future. As stated before, "identities are never static and are always changing."[289] For the past seven years the AKP has shown that it can balance and blend multiple values into one synthetic identity much like it has balanced foreign relations on all sides of its borders through its "zero problems with neighbors" foreign policy.[290] Though a few things have changed over these years that could suggest Turkey building a closer relation to its south and east rather than a complete balance on all sides. One such thing that has changed is Turkey's potential for becoming a member of the EU. Although some EU members find Turkey a prime candidate for admission, the two major powers in the EU, France and Germany, do not view Turkey as anything more than a "privileged partner."[291] At the same time, Iranian and Egyptian influence in the Middle East and North Africa has waned over the last decade leaving an opening for regional leadership.[292] With a growing economic powerbase, a common religious and historical background, and gaining the respect of Arab countries through berating the U.S. for the war in Iraq and Israel for its attacks in Gaza, Turkey could provide that regional leadership, which may seem more beneficial to them than chasing dreams of EU membership.[293] In addition,

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[288] SETA Policy Brief, "The Obama Presidency: A View From Turkey," *SETA Foundation*, Ankara, Brief No: 29, January 2009.

[289] Abdelal and Herrara, "Identity as a Variable," 17.

[290] Davotoglu, "Turkey's Foreign Policy Vision: An Assessment of 2007," 80.

[291] From the Economist Intelligence Unit Views Wire, "Trouble for Turkey?," *The Economist*, 13 February 2008.

[292] The Economist print edition, "Looking East and South," *The Economist*, Istanbul, 29 October 2009.

[293] Mark A. McDonald, "Turkey: An Opportunity for Regional Leadership," *STRATFOR*, 21 January 2009.

Turkey has continued to make themselves an attractive partner to states in the Balkans, the Caucasus, and Central Asia, which could possibly propel them to leadership status in these regions in the future as well.

This independent foreign policy and regional leadership does not necessarily bother the United States and its allies. Indeed the U.S. would actually prefer Turkey to take up such a role as a leader among its neighbors as it represents a more modern-secular Muslim democracy and NATO ally.[294] In this way, Turkey could portray itself as an effective democratic model for other Muslim states and societies, reducing radical Islamist tendencies. This is especially important as the U.S. has taken a blow to its popularity in the Middle East due to its war in Iraq. More importantly, when the U.S. finally pulls out of Iraq, it is going to need a powerful and influential partner, like Turkey, to help stabilize Iraq. But even though Turkey will continue relations with its Western allies, the days of Turkey being an unwavering support force to the U.S. are over.

It will be worrisome to the U.S. if Turkey continues to take Iran's side on the nuclear debate. Another problematic development is the deterioration in relations between Turkey and Israel. Although Turkey's harsh rhetoric toward Israel may merely be a fleeting move to court better ties with Muslim states in the Middle East and North Africa, the growing degree of anti-Semitism in Turkey is hard to ignore. One must also ask how long Turkey will reprimand Israel or how far it will go in seeking the respect of its Muslim neighbors. Even though these rhetorical attacks on Israel received praise from fellow Muslim states, it will not help them internationally, nor will Turkey's derision help mend the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian and Israeli-Syrian conflicts.

The most worrisome matter about Turkey and the AKP, is its leader, Erdogan. Indeed, Erdogan's growing autocratic behavior should be observed carefully. It is important for the AKP to maintain a significant degree of opposition for the ongoing development of Turkey to continue effectively and peacefully. However, it is in the author's opinion that Turkey's civil society, military, and diverse population, are too strong for authoritarianism to manifest. Moreover, there are only a few warning signs

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[294] McDonald, "Turkey: An Opportunity for Regional Leadership."

that signal a reverse course toward political instability or external hostility. Overall, internally and externally, Turkey is performing well. It would be unwise to say that these developments are permanent. Indeed they could vanish as quickly as they cropped up.

It is important for U.S. policy makers to become aware of what Turkey's aims are and why. This starts in examining Turkey's national identity. This can be done through observing Turkish society's response to their current ruling party's political, societal, and economic policy-making and how well Turks identify with those decisions. Understanding Turkey's national identity allows one to forecast likely scenarios about Turkey's future foreign. Since the United States has large interests in the regions that Turkey has a growing influential role, such as the Middle East, Europe, and Eurasia, it is critical that the United States understands what drives Turkey's foreign policy.

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